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THE

Dignity, Office,

AND

AUTHORITY

OF THE

PRIESTHOOD.

BEING

SERMONS

Preach'd by the Right Rev^d^ Father
in GOD,

WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, D. D.

Late Lord Biſhop of St. *ASAPH.*

Printed from his Original Manuſcripts.

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PREACHED BY THE RIGHT REV. FATHER IN GOD,

WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, D. D.

[redacted]

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

THE Right Reverend the late Biſhop of St. *Aſaph*, having left ſeveral *Sermons* and other *Treatiſes on Divine Subjects*, written and Corrected with his own Hand; I, whom he was pleaſed to make his Executor, think my ſelf under an indiſpenſable Obligation to make them publick, both in Juſtice to the Author, and to the World. For though the great Modeſty of that Reverend Prelate,

late, which was equal to his Learning and other Virtues, would not suffer him in his Life time to publish many things in *English*; yet it would not be decent or fitting in me, who have had such great Obligations to him, to stifle his learned Labours, and to deprive his Memory of the Honour that will redound to it by the Publication of his Excellent and Pious Writings. Neither could I answer it to the World, to deprive the Church of *England* of so valuable a Treasure of Piety and Learning, which, I doubt not, will much more enrich the Church, than the Legacy of Money which his Lordship in great Charity left to it. For these Discourses explain its Doctrines, vindicate its Ceremonies and Discipline, with that pure and holy Zeal, and with that Clearness and Strength of Reason; that a serious and impartial Perusal of them will, by the Blessing of God, animate and confirm

firm its Friends, and gain over its greateſt Enemies, to the Love an Admiration of its Eſtabliſhment and Conſtitution.

Though this Prelate had lived long enough for himſelf, having arrived at a great Age, yet he lived too ſhort a time for the Church, to which he was a great Ornament, and a ſincere and conſtant Friend in all Circumſtances. And we have great Reaſon to be very thankful to the Divine Providence, which having deprived the Church of his living Labours, hath yet left it the means of profiting by his Preaching and Inſtructions.

Timothy Gregory.

THE CONTENTS.

SERMON I.

MATTH. XXVii. 20.

And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World. p. 1

SERMON II.

ACTS i. 26.

And they gave forth their Lots, and the Lot fell upon Matthias. *And he was numbred with the Eleven Apostles.* p. 47

SER-

The CONTENTS.

SERMON III.

2 Cor. iv. 1.

Therefore seeing we have this Ministry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not. p. 81

SERMON IV.

Acts ii. 47.

And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved. p. 109

SER-

The CONTENTS.

SERMON V.

JOHN xii. 20.

And there were certain Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the Feast. p. 161

SERMON VI.

2 TIM. i. 13.

Hold fast the Form of sound Words which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus. p. 197

SER-

The CONTENTS.

SERMON VII.

1 Cor. ii. 2.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. p. 257

SERMON VIII.

1 Pet. ii. 5.

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. p. 281

SER-

The CONTENTS.

SERMON IX.

ACTS xiii. 3.

And when they had fasted and pray'd, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away. p. 309

SERMON X.

1 THESS. ii. 13.

For this Cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of Men, but, as it is in Truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. p. 341

SER-

The CONTENTS:

SERMON XI.

2 Cor. v. 20.

Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. p. 376

SERMON XII.

2 Cor. xiii. 14.

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. p. 404

SER-

SERMON I.

MATTH. XXVIII. 20.

And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.

WE are here assembled in the Name and in the Presence of Jesus Christ our Lord, and not only ours, but the Lord of the whole World, having absolute and supreme Dominion over the whole Creation; not only as he is God, and the Creator of all things, but likewise as Man too: His humane Nature by reason of its Union to the Divine Person, and its perfect Obedience to the Divine Will, being exalted above, and invested with Power over all other Creatures whatsoever. For even as he is the Son of Man, *There is given him Dominion, and Glory, and a King-*

dom, that all People, Nations and Languages should serve him, Dan. 7. And *he having humbled himself, and become obedient to* Death, *even the death upon the Cross, therefore* God *also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in the Earth, and things under the Earth, and that every Tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father,* Phil. 2. Hence we find the holy Angels themselves waiting upon him at his Birth, in the Wilderness, in his Agony, and at his Resurrection, when they also acknowledg'd him to be the Lord, saying, *Come and see the place where the Lord lay, Matth.* 28. 6. Yea, all the Angels of God worship him, and are commanded so to do, *Heb.* 1. 6. And as for this lower World, he hath *the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for his Possession, Psal.* 2. He hath Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the ends of the Earth, *All Kings are bound to fall down before him, and all Nations to serve him. Psal* 72.

All Creatures therefore, both in Heaven and Earth, are now subject to our Lord Christ, and he orders, governs, and disposeth of them all according to his own Will and Pleasure, and so as shall most con-

duce

duce to his own Glory, and his Church's Good. For God having *raiſed him from the Dead, hath ſet him at his own right hand, far above all Principality and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but alſo, that which is to come; and hath put all things under his Feet, and made him Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, the Fulneſs of him that filleth all in all*, *Eph.* 1. He is the Head therefore not only of the Church, but over all things to or for the Church: So that nothing is exempted from his Dominion; nothing in Heaven, in Earth, or Hell, but what is ſubject to his Power; and therefore, nothing but what he can do for his own Catholick Church, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood. He can aſſiſt it with his Grace, ſanctify it by his Spirit, protect it by his Power, he can make all things in Heaven and Earth work together for its preſent Peace and future Glory, maugre all the Oppoſition that Men or Devils can make againſt it.

Thus much I thought good to premiſe concerning our Lord's Power, in order to the Explication of the Words which I have now read, becauſe he himſelf thought ſo when he ſpake them. For being now about to ſend his Apoſtles into the World, to preach and propagate the Goſpel which

he had planted, he first shews them, as it were, his own Commission; acquainting them with the Power he had to send them, and that in such Words as comprehend all that I have said concerning it, yea, as much as Words are able to express. *All Power*, saith he, *is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth, Go ye therefore and teach all Nations*, &c. ver. 18. 19. As if he should have said, I have now all Power over all things in the World, conferred upon me, by virtue whereof I command, empower, and commissionate you to enlarge, settle, and govern the Church that I have founded; to administer the Sacraments that I have instituted; and to persuade Mankind to embrace my Doctrine, to submit to my Discipline, to obey my Laws, and to come up to the Terms which I have procured for them, and propounded to them, in order to their Salvation.

Go ye therefore, says he, *and teach all Nations*: or as the Word μαθητεύσατε properly signifies, *Make all Nations my Disciples, bring them over to my Religion, that both* Jews *and* Gentiles *may become one Flock under me, the great Shepherd and Bishop of their Souls.* And this saith he, I would have you do two ways, *First, by Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*, and so initiating them into my Church, upon

on their consenting to the Faith which I have published to the World. And *Secondly*, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, that so they may be my Disciples indeed, and not only by an outward Profession of the Faith which I have taught them, but likewise by performing sincere and universal Obedience to all the Commands that I have laid upon them.

When our Saviour gave this Charge to his Apostles, we may easily imagine that they were strangely surprized at the hearing of it. As when God bad *Moses* go and bring the Children of *Israel* out of *Ægypt*, *Moses said unto him, who am I, that I should go to* Pharaoh, *and that I should bring forth the Children of* Israel *out of* Egypt? *Exod.* 3. 11. So when our Lord bad his Apostles go and bring all Nations out of their Idolatries and Superstitions, into the Profession of his Religion, the Apostles certainly could not but wonder at it, and say, at least within themselves, Who are we, a company of poor, weak and illiterate Men, that we should go to all Nations, that we should bring them off from the Religions of their Forefathers, and that we should ever persuade the World to believe in a crucified Christ? This our Lord foresaw, and therefore, as God answered *Moses*, saying, *certainly I will be*

with thee; ſo does our Saviour here encourage his Apoſtles, ſaying, *And behold, I am with you alway, even to the end of the World.*

Words of very great Importance to us all, to the whole Church of God, eſpecially to the Governours of it, and to thoſe that admininiſter the Word and Sacraments in it. For as much as all the Succeſs that can be expected from the Execution of any Eccleſiaſtical Function, depends upon the performance of this Promiſe, which therefore our Lord has ſo Worded, that there is not a Word in it but what hath its Emphaſis, and is much to be obſerved by us. As he himſelf ſeems to intimate, by prefacing it with ἰδοὺ, Behold, take ſpecial Notice of what I now ſay unto you.

Hence therefore we ſhall *Firſt*, very briefly conſider the Words apart, that ſo we may come to the better underſtanding of the whole. *Firſt*, ſaith he, *I am with you*, I, the eternal Son of God, and now become the Son of Man too; I, who have the Angels at my beck, and make the the Devils tremble with my Looks; I, who in your ſight have cauſed the Storms to ceaſe, the Blind to ſee, the Lame to walk, the Dead to riſe, only with a Word of my Mouth; I, who was delivered for your Offences, but

am

am now rais'd again for your Juſtification; I, who have all Power both in Heeaven and Earth committed to me; I am with you. Not I will be with, but I am with you, in the Preſent Tenſe, minding them thereby of his Divine Eſſence and Power, to which all things are preſent. And therefore, as he elſewhere ſaith, *Before Abraham was I am*, So here I am with you at all times to the end of the World, as really as at this preſent.

And then it follows, I am μεθ' ὑμῶν, with you my Apoſtles. For that theſe Words were ſpoken, and this Promiſe made only to the Apoſtles, is plain, from that the Eleven only are ſaid to be preſent at this time, Ver. 16. And that beſides this Promiſe is made only to thoſe who now received Commiſſion to go and convert all Nations to the Chriſtian Faith, to baptize and teach Mankind the Commands of Chriſt; which Commiſſion being granted only to the Apoſtles, this Promiſe alſo, annexed to it, muſt needs belong to them only. But then we muſt obſerve likewiſe, that as it belongs to them only, ſo it belongs to them all alike. *I am with you*, ſaith he, not with *Peter* only, or any one or more of you, but with you all equally, one as well as another. Yea, ſaith he, *I am with you*, πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, every day, where-

ſoever you are, whenſoever you do any thing towards the executing the Commiſſion which I have now given you, I am with you in the doing of it. And that too, ἕως τ συντελείας τ αἰῶνος, to the very end of the World; that is, ſo long as I have a Church upon Earth, which ſhall be till my coming again to judge the World: all this while I promiſe to be with you, and therefore as long as the World ſhall laſt.

The Words being thus explained apart, that we may rightly apprehend our Lord's Meaning in the whole, there are two things to be conſidered: *Firſt*, in what Senſe the Apoſtles were to continue to the end of the World. *Secondly*, in what Senſe our Saviour here promiſes to be with them all that while.

As for the *Firſt*, it is plain, that our Saviour here ſuppoſeth that Apoſtles were to continue upon Earth to the end of the World, for otherwiſe it would be impoſſible for him to be with them ſo long, and by conſequence to perform this Promiſe to them. But it is as plain likewiſe, that the Perſons to whom our Saviour ſpeaks theſe Words; were not to be here ſo long, being all long ago dead. And therefore I do not ſee how we can poſſibly underſtand the Words in any other Senſe than this, even that our Lord ſpake them to his Apoſtles, not

not as private Persons, as *Peter*, *James*, or *John*, &c. but as Apostles, as Persons now placed by him in an Office, that should always continue in his Church. So that the Promise is made not so much to the Persons of the Apostles, as to the Office Apostolical; or at least to their Persons only as vested with that Office, and by Consequence to all Persons, to the end of the World, that should ever have that Office conferred upon them.

For our better understanding of this, we must consider what it is properly to be an Apostle of Christ, or wherein the Office purely Apostolical, consisted. For which we must know, that those which the Scriptures, and we from them, call Apostles, had many extraordinary Privileges granted to them, which were not Essential to their Office, nor peculiar to them as Apostles, but common to them with other Disciples, and therefore were to die with them. As for Example, were they called immediately by Christ himself? So were the Seventy, who were the Ear and Eye Witnesses of what Christ taught and did: So were many others as well as they. Were they Divinely inspired to speak all manner of Languages? to foretel things to come? to work Miracles to confirm their Doctrine? So were they which were no Apo-

stles

ſtles, as well as they that were. And therefore ſuch things as theſe, cannot be look'd upon as any part of the Apoſtolical Office, but only as extraordinary Favours and Privileges vouchſafed to the Perſons of the Apoſtles.

But the Office, properly Apoſtolical, conſiſted only in ſuch things as had an immediate Reference, to the propagating, edifying, and governing of the Church in all Ages. Indeed, our Saviour himſelf gives the Apoſtles a particular Deſcription of their Office, in the very Commiſſion he here grants them for the Execution of it; Commanding them to convert all Nations to his Religion, to adminiſter the Sacraments to them, and to teach them all things that he had commanded them. Under which is contained whatſoever is neceſſary to the Inſtruction and Government of his Church in all Ages; as the Ordaining Perſons to do it, cenſuring thoſe who refuſe Inſtruction, comforting and encouraging thoſe who receive it, and the like. This was properly the Office Apoſtolical, which therefore was not to die with the Perſons of the Apoſtles, but was to be tranſmitted by them to all after Ages, as our Lord himſelf intimates in the very Deſcription of it. For he here bids his Apoſtles go and make all Nations his Diſciples: which it is plain,

the Perſons he ſpake theſe Words to, neither did, nor ever could accompliſh, being to continue, as we know they did, but a little while upon Earth, wherein it was impoſſible for them to go over all Nations, much more to perſuade them all to embrace the Chriſtian Faith. And therefore this Command it ſelf, as well as the Promiſe, muſt needs be ſo underſtood, as to be given not only to the Perſons of the Apoſtles then preſent, but to all that ſhould ſucceed them in that Office to the end of the World. So that from this very Command, we reaſonably conclude, that theſe Words were meant not only of the Apoſtles themſelves, but of their Succeſſors in that Office all along, until all Nations have received the Goſpel of Chriſt. Much more if we conſider the Promiſe annexed to it, *And lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the World*, which cannot poſſibly be fulfilled, unleſs there be Apoſtles, or Perſons veſted with the Apoſtolical Office, alway unto the end of the World.

Hence therefore it was, that the Apoſtles, having received this Command and Promiſe from our Lord, and underſtanding from thence that is was his Pleaſure that they ſhould transfer their Office to all future Ages, by ordaining others into it; took care to do it. For beſides the

Eleven

Eleven, to whom theſe Words were ſpoken, we find *Matthias*, *Paul* and *Barnabas* admitted into the ſame Office, and expreſly call'd Apoſtles as well as they. So is *Epaphroditus*, Biſhop of *Philippi*, called by St. *Paul* himſelf. *Phil.* 2. And if we conſult the antient Records of the Church, we ſhall there find, that *James* Biſhop of *Hieruſalem*, *Mark* of *Alexandria*, *Timothy* of *Epheſus*, *Titus* of *Crete*, and *Clemens* of *Rome*, were all called Apoſtles. And as *Theodoret* obſerves τὺς νυὶ καλυμβύυς Ἐπισκόπυς, Ἀποςόλυς ὠνόμαζον, thoſe which we now call Biſhops the Primitive Chriſtians called Apoſtles. And ſo indeed may all Biſhops, rightly ordained, be called, as having the ſame Office in Church which the Apoſtles had. And therefore the Office which *Matthias* was choſen into, is called Ἐπισκοπὴ, the Office of a Biſhop, *Acts* 1. 19. Hence St. *Cyprian* ſometimes calls Biſhops by the name of Apoſtles, ſometimes Apoſtles by the name of Biſhops. And the reaſon is, becauſe Biſhops, as St. *Hierom* expreſſes it, *Apoſtolorum locum tenent*, they ſupply the place of the Apoſtles. Hence alſo, not only St. *Cyprian*, but *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*, aſſert Biſhops to be the Apoſtles Succeſſors, and reckon up the Succeſſion of ſeveral of them from the Apoſtles themſelves. And St. *Hierom* himſelf, having affirmed all Biſhops

ſhops of whatſoever City, great or ſmall, to be *ejuſdem meriti*, *ejuſdem & ſacerdotii*, he adds, *cæterum omnes Apoſtolorum ſucceſſores ſunt*, they are all Succeſſors to the Apoſtles.

And therefore whatſoever our Lord ſaid to the Apoſtles, as ſuch, all ſucceeding Apoſtles or Biſhops are obliged by it, as well as they: As St. *Cyprian* obſerved long ago, ſaying, *Chriſtus qui dicit ad Apoſtolos, ac per hoc ad omnes præpoſitos, qui Apoſtolis vicariâ ordinatione ſuccedunt.* For the Office is the ſame now as it was then. So that in the Apoſtles Days, and in all after Ages, and in all places of the World, as the ſame Father words it, *Epiſcopatus unus eſt, cujus à ſingulis in ſolidum pars tenetur.* There is but one Epiſcopacy, but one Epiſcopal Office, a part whereof is wholly poſſeſſed by every Biſhop. Which, as it quite overthrows the Supremacy which the Biſhop of *Rome* pretends to over all other Biſhops, ſo it ſufficiently proves the true Senſe and Meaning of the Words in my Text. For ſeeing the Office is ſtill one and the ſame now which it was in the Apoſtles days, and ſo will continue to the end of the World; ſo that ſeeing there always will be ſuch Apoſtles in the Church, our Saviour ſpeaking to the Eleven as Apoſtles, might well ſay, *Lo, I am with you to the end of the World.*

Having

Having thus discovered in what Sense the Apostles were to continue in the Church to the end of the World; we are now to consider in what Sense our Lord here promises to be always with them. To find out which, we need not have recourse to the wild and extravagant Opinion of the *Ubiquetarians*, asserting the humane Nature of Christ to be every where present. Neither is it sufficient to observe that his Divine Essence is present with them. For so it is with every Creature, no Creature being able to subsist without it: Whereas our Saviour here promiseth to be with his Apostles in some such peculiar Sense, as can belong only to them, and to them only as his Apostles. And that we might not be mistaken in a matter of such Consequence as this, he himself hath elsewhere explain'd himself, and left upon Record how these Words are to be understood. For, as he here promises his Apostles that he will be with them to the end of the World; so he elsewhere tells them, that his holy Spirit shall be always with them. *And I will pray the Father*, saith he, *and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth. John* 14. 16. which is the same in Effect with his own being always with them. For the Spirit proceeding from the Son, as well as from the Father,

Father, and being of the ſame Nature and Eſſence with him, *Whereſoever the Spirit is, there is Chriſt alſo.* So that in ſhort, our Saviour here promiſeth his Apoſtles, that he will be always with them to the end of the World, by his holy Spirit, accompanying and aſſiſting of them in the Diſcharge of their Apoſtolical Office. In the Diſcharge, I ſay, of their Apoſtolical Office. For we are ſtill to remember what I obſerved before, even that theſe Words were ſpoken to the Apoſtles andtheir Succeſſors, only as ſuch: And therefore Chriſt's Preſence with them by his holy Spirit here promiſed, cannot be underſtood only of his illuminating, or ſanctifying, or comforting Preſence, which he vouchſafeth to all Believers as well as unto them; but it muſt be underſtood in ſuch a Senſe as is proper to the Apoſtles, Paſtors and Governours of his Church in all Ages: which in brief, amounts to no more nor leſs than this, even that Chriſt having conſtituted ſuch an Office in his Church, for the Government and Edification of it to the end of the World; He here promiſeth that he himſelf, by his holy Spirit, will be always preſent at the Execution of it, ſo as to make it effectual to the great Ends and Purpoſes for which it was deſigned.

To explain this more fully to you, it will

will be neceſſary to inſtance in the ſeveral parts of the Apoſtolical Office, and to ſhew how Chriſt, according to his Promiſe, is always preſent by his Spirit at the Performance of them. Now the *Firſt* and principal part of this Office, is the Ordaining others into it, and giving them Power to ordain others, and ſo ſucceſſively to the end of the World; which is neceſſarily ſuppoſed in the Promiſe it ſelf, as that without which it could never be fulfilled.

The *Firſt* therefore that were ordained in this Office, were ordained by Chriſt himſelf. The form and manner of which Ordination is ſet down, *John* 20. 21. where it is ſaid that Chriſt, coming to his Apoſtles, ſaid to them, *Peace be with you, as the Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you. And having ſaid this, he breathed, and ſaid unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghoſt.* Where we may plainly ſee how our Saviour would be with his Apoſtles, after his Body was removed from them, even by his holy Spirit, which he therefore breaths from himſelf into them, by that means conſecrating them his Apoſtles and Vicegerents upon Earth. Telling them withal, that as the Father ſent him, ſo he ſent them. Whereby he certifies them, that whatſoever Power he had received from the Father, for

the

the Instruction and Government of his Church, he now left the same with them, or rather with the holy Spirit which he breathed into them. And by consequence, that as he sent them, so were they to send others, by conferring the Spirit upon them, and so from one to another all along, that the Spirit which they now received, might continue with them and their Successors, and so supply his place upon Earth, until his coming again.

Hence the Apostles, being thus ordained and instructed by our Lord, took special Care to transfer the same Spirit to others, which they had received from him. But this they could not do after the same manner as Christ had done it to them, even by breathing upon them. For that way was peculiar to Christ, from whom the Spirit proceedeth. Wherefore they, being doubtless directed thereto by the same Spirit, transmitted it to others by laying their Hands upon them; which was the old way which had been used in the Church before. For so *Moses* communicated the Spirit of Wisdom to *Joshua*, thereby constituting him his Successor in the Government of *Israel*, even by laying his Hands upon him, *Deut.* 34. Thus *Paul* and *Barnabas* were ordained by the special appointment of the Holy Ghost himself,

ſelf, *Acts* 13. 3. For it is ſaid, That they having faſted and prayed, laid their Hands upon them, and ſo ſent them out: Who thereupon are ſaid in the next Verſe to be ſent by the Holy Ghoſt; it being now conferred upon them by the Impoſition of Hands. Thus St. *Paul* communicated, χάρισμα τῦ θεῦ, as he calls it, the Gift of the Spirit unto *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. And whereſoever we read that the Apoſtles ordained any, they ſtill did it after this manner, even by laying their Hands upon them: and that too, whether they ordained them into their whole Office, or elſe into any part of it. For the whole Care of the Church being committed unto them, they had Power to conſtitute what Officers they thought fit under them. But ſtill they did it by laying their Hands upon them, and ſo communicating of the ſame Spirit unto them, which they had received from Chriſt. As when they found it neceſſary to have *Deacons* in the Church, to take Care of the Widows, they ordained them, by laying their Hands upon them, *Acts* 6. 6. thereby transferring ſo much of the Spirit upon them, as was neceſſary for that Office. And when they afterwards ſaw it very neceſſary that there ſhould be other Officers in the Church, which we now call *Presbyters*, that ſhould

have

have Power under them to preach the Goſpel, and adminiſter the Sacraments in places where they themſelves could not be always preſent; upon theſe alſo they laid their Hands, and by that means communicated ſo much of the Spirit unto them, as was neceſſary for the due and effectual Execution of the ſaid Office.

Thus therefore it is, that the Apoſtolical Office hath been handed down from one to another ever ſince the Apoſtles days to our time, and ſo will be to the end of the World, Chriſt himſelf being continually preſent at ſuch Impoſition of Hands, thereby transferring the ſameS pirit, which he at firſt breathed into his Apoſtles, upon others ſucceſſively after them, as really as he was preſent with the Apoſtles themſelves, when he firſt breathed it into them. Inſomuch, that they who are thus ordained, are ſaid to be made Biſhops by the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, as well as the Apoſtles were, *Acts*. 20. ver. 28. By which means the Holy Catholick Church always hath been, and ſtill is truly Apoſtolical, as it is called in the *Nicene* Creed. And the ſeveral parts of the Apoſtolical Office are now as effectually performed by their Succeſſors, and others ordained under them, as they were while the Apoſtles themſelves lived. For it was not the Perſons of the

Apoſtles, but their Office, influenced and aſſiſted by the Spirit of God, that made the Sacraments they adminiſtred to be valid, and their Preaching of the Goſpel ſo prevalent upon thoſe that heard it. Though *Paul* himſelf planted, and *Apollos* watered, it was God only that gave the Increaſe.

And ſo it is to this Day. All the Efficacy that there is or can be in the Adminiſtration of any Eccleſiaſtical Office, depends altogether upon the Spirit of God, going along with the Office, and aſſiſting at the Execution of it. Without which, the Sacraments we adminiſter would be but empty Signs, and our preaching no more than beating of the Air. Whereas on the other ſide, Chriſt, according to his Promiſe, being always preſent by his holy Spirit, at the Adminiſtration of the ſeveral Offices which he has ordained in his Church, they can never fail of their deſigned Effect, if the Perſons to whom they are adminiſtred, be but rightly diſpoſed and qualified for it. By this means they that are duly baptized, are *born again, not only of Water, but of the Spirit alſo*, *John* 3. 5. and ſo together with the *Laver of Regeneration, they have the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, *Tit.* 3. 5. Hence alſo in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the worthy Receiver does really by Faith partake

of

of the Myſtical Body and Blood of Chriſt, and of ſuch Influences of the holy Spirit as ſhall enable him to walk as becomes a Member of Chriſt. And whenſoever we read, preach, or publiſh the Goſpel as Chriſt taught it, the holy Spirit goes along with it, ſo that it becomes the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth. And ſeeing our Lord thus continually accompanies the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, ſo as to vouchſafe his Spirit to thoſe on whom they lay their Hands, and to co-operate by the ſame Spirit with thoſe who are ſo ordained by them, in their Adminiſtration of the Word and Sacraments. Hence, he may well be ſaid to be always with them, according to the Promiſe he makes them in my Text.

But beſides that Impoſition of Hands, whereby the Apoſtles tranſmitted the Spirit they had received, together with their Apoſtolical Office, down to ſucceeding Ages, we find them ſometimes laying their Hands on Believers baptized, that thereby the Holy Ghoſt might come upon them, not with reſpect to any Office, but only to confirm and ſtrengthen them in the Chriſtian Faith.

For when the *Samaritans* had received the Word of God, and were baptized by *Philip*, who was no Apoſtle, but only a

Deacon, the Apoſtles at *Hieruſalem* hearing of it, ſent *Peter* and *John* unto them, who having laid their Hands upon them, they received the Holy Ghoſt, *Acts* 8. *Philip* indeed having had the Apoſtles Hands laid upon him, had thereby received Power to baptize them with Water and the Holy Ghoſt: But it ſeems he had no Power to lay his Hands upon them, and by that means to confer any greater meaſure of the Spirit upon them. No, that was to be done only by the Apoſtles themſelves: who therefore ſent two of their own Body, as far as from *Hieruſalem* to *Samaria*, on purpoſe to do it, which certainly they would never have done, had this been an uſeleſs Ceremony, or if *Philip* or any one under an Apoſtle could have done it. So that this Inſtance is, of it ſelf, ſufficient to prove that this was an Act peculiar to the Apoſtolical Office. And that our Saviour, according to his Promiſe, was really preſent at the performance of it; ſeeing the Apoſtles had no ſooner laid their Hands upon them, but they immediately received the Holy Ghoſt. Another Inſtance of the ſame Nature we find, *Acts* 19. where St. *Paul* being at *Epheſus*, and finding ſome Diſciples there, baptized only with the Baptiſm of *John*, he laid his Hands upon them, and ſo they received the Holy Ghoſt.

Hence

Hence, the Catholick Church in all Ages, hath not only retained this Apoſtolical Rite, which we now call *Confirmation*, but hath always eſteemed it an eſſential part of the Apoſtolical Office, and therefore to be performed by none but the Apoſtles themſelves and their Succeſſors, to the end of the World. And therefore it was the antient and conſtant Cuſtom of tho Primitive Church, as it is ours, for the Biſhop of every Dioceſe to go into the leſſer Cities and Villages belonging to him, and there lay his Hands upon thoſe who were baptized by Prieſts or Deacons, that they might receive the Holy Ghoſt. As we learn from St. *Hierome* himſelf, whoſe words are, *Non abnuo hanc eſſe Eccleſiarum conſuetudinem, ut ad eos qui minoribus urbibus per Presbyteros & Diaconos baptizati ſunt, Epiſcopus ad invocationem ſancti Spiritus manum impoſiturus excurrat.*

And therefore how any Biſhops in our Days, dare neglect ſo conſiderable a part of their Office, I know not, but fear they will have no good Account to give of it, when they come to ſtand before our Lord's Tribunal. And as for others who, contrary to the Practice of the Primitive Chriſtians, either refuſe or neglect Confirmation, when they may have it adminiſtred to them, they have juſt Cauſe to ſuſpect

that they have no good Senſe of Religion, nor Regard for the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit, for if they had, they would uſe all means for the attainment thereof; eſpecially this, which hath been found effectual for that end by the Catholick and Apoſtolick Church in all Ages, where Perſons have been duly prepared for it. Our Lord being, according to his Promiſe in my Text, always preſent at the performance of this, as well as of any other part of the Apoſtolical Office.

There is one thing ſtill behind, which we muſt by no means omit, eſpecially upon this Occaſion: And that is the Power of governing the Church, which our Lord left with his Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, to the end of the World; but ſo that he, according to his Promiſe, is always preſent with them at the Execution of it. For this Power is granted to them in the very Charter to which this Promiſe is annexed. For here our Lord gives them Commiſſion not only to baptize, but likewiſe to teach thoſe who are his Diſciples, to obſerve whatſoever he had commanded. Whereby they are empowered both to declare what are thoſe Commands of Chriſt which Men ought to obſerve, and alſo to uſe all Means to prevail upom Men to obſerve them. Such as are, correcting and puniſhing thoſe who

violate

violate, rewarding and encouraging thoſe which keep them. But our Saviour's Kingdom being, as himſelf ſaith, not of this World, but purely Spiritual; he hath authorized his Subſtitutes in the Government of it, to uſe Rewards and Puniſhments of the ſame Nature; even to admoniſh Delinquents in his Name to forſake their Sins, and if they continue Obſtinate, and neglect ſuch Admonitions, to excommunicate, or caſt them out of his Church; and, upon their Repentance, to abſolve and receive them in again. This Power our Saviour firſt promiſed to St. *Peter*, and in him to the reſt of the Apoſtles *Matth.* 16. But it was not actually conferred upon them, till after his Reſurrection, when having breathed, he ſaid unto them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt: Whoſe ſoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted to them, and whoſe ſoever Sins ye retain, they are retained*, *John* 20. As if he ſhould have ſaid, I, the Son of Man, having Power upon Earth alſo to forgive Sins, do now commit the ſame to you; ſo that whoſe Sins ſoever are remitted or retained by you, are ſo by me alſo. And from whence it is plain, both that the Apoſtles received Power to remit and retain Sins; and that Chriſt himſelf concurs with them in the Exerciſe of that Power, and how he doth it, even by his holy Spirit now breathed into them.

To

To explain the full Extent and Latitude of this Power, would require more time than can be allowed upon this Day, whereon 'tis to be exercised: and therefore I shall observe only two things concerning it, whereof the *First* is, that how great soever the Power be, which our Lord committed to his Apostles, and their Successors, for the Government of his Church in all Ages, it is but Ministerial; they act only under him, as his Ministers and Stewards, and must one day give an Account to him of all their Actions. Yea, whatsoever Power they have of this Nature, it is still his Power in their Hands, they derive it continually from him, who is always present with them. And therefore, as they themselves need to have a care how they exert this Power, or neglect the exerting of it; so others had need to take care too, that they neither resist nor despise it.

The other Thing I would observe unto you, is, that for the better Execution of this Power, it hath been the constant Custom of the Apostles, and their Successors in all Ages, to visit the Churches committed to their Charge; to enquire into the Faith and Manners, both of the Clergy and Laity that are under them; and to use so much of their Authority, and give such Orders

as

as they found neceſſary for the due Obſervation of their Lord's Commands. Thus we find the Apoſtles frequently viſiting the Churches they had planted; and St. *Paul* particularly keeping a ſolemn Viſitation at *Miletus*, where he ſent for the Elders of *Epheſus* and of all *Aſia*, (as *Irenæus* affirms, and the Context it ſelf proves) and ſummoned them to appear before him there, where he gave them many Apoſtolical Admonitions and Directions how to feed the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt had made them Overſeers, *Acts* 20. Afterwards, we find it recorded in Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, that St. *John* often viſited the *Aſiatick* Churches, as his peculiar Province. And I do not queſtion, but where we read of *Pinytus* Biſhop of *Gnoſſus*, and *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria*, laying their Commands upon their Clergy, in the firſt Ages of the Church, it was at ſuch a Viſitation as this. And we cannot doubt of St. *Cyprian's* Care in this Particular, ſo long as he reſided upon his Biſhoprick, ſeeing that in his very Receſs, when he was forced to retire, he viſited them, as himſelf ſaith, by his Letters, ſending ſeveral both to the Clergy and Laity, ſtill extant in his Works, wherein he ſometimes reproves, ſometimes admoniſhes and directs them how to carry and behave themſelves in that Juncture.

Indeed,

Indeed, this is ſo neceſſary to the diſcharging of the Epiſcopal or Apoſtolical Office, that it cannot be imagined, that ever any conſcientious Biſhop durſt neglect it. Inſomuch, that forſeveral Ages after the Apoſtles, we have no Eccleſiaſtical Law or Canon, as I remember, about Epiſcopal Viſitations, becauſe there was no need of them till about the ſixth or ſeventh Century, when there were ſeveral Canons made concerning the time and manner of keeping them. As the ſixth Council at *Arles* decreed, that every Biſhop ſhould go about his Dioceſe once every Year. *Ivo* quotes an antient Canon of the ſecond Council at *Sevil*, that every Biſhop ſhall once a Year go about his Dioceſe, and confirm and teach the People. The ſecond Council at *Braga* in *Portugal* decreed, that Biſhops in their Viſitations ſhould inſtruct their Clergy how to adminiſter the Sacrament. The fourth at *Toledo*, that they ſhall then enquire into the Fabrick of their ſeveral Churches, and examine what Repairs they wanted. Another at *Auguſta Vindeliroxum*, or *Ausburg* as ſome think, as others at *Ratisbone* in *Germany*; decreed, that when the Biſhop goes about his Dioceſe to confirm the People, the Presbyters ſhall be always ready to attend him. There are ſeveral other Canons, enjoyning Biſhops

to

to visit at least once a Year, and directing them what to do at their Visitations, but none that I know of that they shall visit in general. The Church taking it for granted all along, that no Bishop would totally omit so necessary a part of his Duty, but would some time, and after some manner or other, visit the Diocese that belonged to him, which certainly none can chuse but do, who considers either the Account he must one day give of his Stewardship, or the Encouragement our Lord himself has given him to do it, in that he hath promis'd to be always with him in the Discharge of his Office, saying to his Apostles and their Successors for ever, *Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the World.*

Now the Promises being duly weighed, even that our Lord himself is always present by his holy Spirit with his Apostles and their Successors in the Execution of the Apostolical Office. Many useful Inferences might be thence deduced. I shall instance in some few, which I hope will not be altogether unworthy of your Consideration at this time.

Hence therefore, in the *First* place, I observe, how much we are all bound to acknowledge the Goodness, to praise, magnify, and adore the Name of the most high God, in that we were born and bred, and

still

ſtill live in a Church wherein the Apoſtolical Line hath, through all Ages, been preſerved entire, there having been a conſtant Succeſſion of ſuch Biſhops in it, as were truly and properly Succeſſors to the Apoſtles, by virtue of that Apoſtolical Impoſition of Hands; which being begun by the Apoſtles, hath been continued from one to another ever ſince their time down to ours. By which means, the ſame Spirit, which was breathed by our Lord into his Apoſtles, is, together with their Office, tranſmittted to their lawful Succeſſors, the Paſtors and Governours of our Church at this time, and acts, moves, and aſſiſts at the Adminiſtration of the ſeveral parts of the Apoſtolical Office in our Days, as much as ever. From whence it follows, that the means of Grace, which we now enjoy, are in themſelves as powerful and effectual as they were in the Apoſtles Days, And if they prove not always ſo Succeſsful now as they were then, that cannot be imputed to any want of Efficacy in them, but to ſome Defect or other in thoſe which uſe them. For they who are duly prepared, cannot but always find the ſame Effect from them, becauſe there is always the ſame Cauſe, even the Spirit of God moving upon his Word and Sacraments, when adminiſtred by our Church, as well

as

as when adminiſtred by the Apoſtles, to whom it was firſt given.

And here it may not be amiſs to obſerve, what I have often thought of, not without Admiration, how ſtrangely the Spirit of the Apoſtles hath run through our Church, all along, ever ſince the Reformation, diffuſing it ſelf from the Head, which firſt received it, into all her real Members, as may eaſily be ſeen, not only in the Diſcipline of our Church, but likewiſe in its Doctrine, manner of Worſhip, Patience under Sufferings, univerſal Charity, and particularly in its Loyalty and Submiſſion to the Civil Magiſtrate; which the Apoſtles, aſſiſted by the Spirit of God, did not only preſs upon others, but practiced themſelves. And the ſame Spirit hath enabled our Church conſtantly to do the ſame. Inſomuch, that Malice it ſelf could never faſten any thing of Rebellion upon our Church, as now conſtituted, nor upon any of her Members that lived faithfully in her Communion. Many of them have ſuffer'd Impriſonment, Sequeſtration, yea Martyrdom it ſelf, as the Apoſtles did; and yet all have been as free from Rebellion and Treaſon as they were; which to me is a great Inſtance of the ſame Spirit ſtill working in in our Church, which wrought ſo effectually upon them.

And

And this I verily believe is the great Reaſon, why the Devil hath ſuch a Spite at our Church, ſtill ſtirring up Adverſaries of all ſorts againſt it; Papiſts on the one Hand, and Sectaries on the other, and all if poſſible to deſtroy it; even becauſe the Spirit, which is miniſtred in it, is ſo contrary to his Nature, and ſo deſtructive of his Kingdom, that he can never expect to domineer and tyrannize over the People of the Land, ſo long as ſuch a Church is ſettled among them, and they continue firm to it. And therefore ſeeing he cannot, by all his ſecret Plots and Contrivances, totally overthrow it, he ſtill uſes the utmoſt of his Skill and Power to draw as many as he can from its Communion, and ſo make them Schiſmaticks, that ſo being ſeparated from the Body, they may not partake of the Spirit that is in it, nor, by conſequence, receive any Benefit from this Promiſe of our Bleſſed Saviour to the Governours of his Catholick and Apoſtolick Church in all Ages, *Lo, I am with you alway, to the end of the World.*

The next thing I would obſerve unto you from what we have now diſcourſed of, concerns us of the Clergy, who are entruſted with any part of the Apoſtolical Office. For being ordained by thoſe who ſucceeded the Apoſtles in a direct Line,

by

by the Impoſition of their Hands upon us, we received not only Power to adminiſter the Word and Sacraments, but likewiſe the Spirit of Chriſt to accompany and influence ſuch Adminiſtrations: By whom therefore, Chriſt himſelf is always preſent with us, whenſoever we are employ'd in the Work that he hath ſet us. Which Conſideration, methinks, ſhould ſtrike an Awe and Terror into us, and make us dread the Thoughts of doing the Work of our Lord negligently. And therefore whether we Miniſter unto him in the publick *Liturgy* of our Church, Read or Preach his Holy Word, or Adminiſter his Bleſſed Sacraments; let us be all perſwaded to have an eſpecial Care that we do it, not after a careleſs or perfunctory Manner, but with all that Reverence and Godly Fear, with that Earneſtneſs and Devotion, with that Seriouſneſs and Intention of Mind, as as becomes thoſe who believe that our Lord himſelf is always preſent with us, not only to take notice of what we do, but to Bleſs and Sanctifie it to the Salvation of Mens immortal Souls.

Hence alſo it concerns us all, to carry and behave our ſelves at all times to the utmoſt of our Power, as becometh the Miniſters of Chriſt: to whom the Eternal Son of God hath vouchſafed ſo high an

Honour, as not only to employ us in his own immediate Service, but likewiſe to reſide himſelf continually with us. And therefore, ſeeing he is pleaſed to Honour us with his own Preſence, let us endeavour to Honour him him too, by walking in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs before him all the Days of our Life. Eſpecially, let us take all the Care we can to avoid whatſoever is offenſive to him, or unworthy of that high and heavenly Calling in which he hath plac'd us. It is true, the Efficacy of the Word and Sacraments, is not impeded by the Wickedneſs or Unworthineſs of him, by whom they are Adminiſtred, as our Church hath rightly determined; becauſe that depends not upon the Perſon, but the Office and Chriſt's Promiſe to it. But howſoever, it behoves us, who attend continually upon him, to walk in all the Commandments of the Lord blameleſs, leſt otherwiſe we bring a Scandal upon our Profeſſion, and give too much occaſion to the Enemies of our Lord to Blaſpheme his moſt Sacred Name. Eſpecially, conſidering what a ſad and diſmal thing it would be, if we, who are employ'd by Chriſt to perſwade others to obey his Goſpel, ſhould not obey it our ſelves, and ſo not ſave our ſelves as well as thoſe that hear us: but be Inſtruments in God's Hand to bring others to

Heaven and yet we our ſelves be caſt down to Hell. Which is not only poſſible, but impoſſible to be avoided, unleſs we look very narrowly to our ſelves: I am ſure St. *Paul*, thought ſo, and therefore ſaith, *I keep under my Body, and bring it into ſubjection, leſt that by any means when I have Preach'd unto others, I my ſelf ſhould become a caſtaway*, 1 Cor. 9. 27. And if ſo great an Apoſtle was forc'd to take ſo much pains with himſelf, leſt when he had Preach'd Salvation unto others, he himſelf ſhould not attain it, what Cauſe have you and I to do ſo? But our Comfort is, that our Lord is always preſent with us, and therefore we can never want Aſſiſtance from him, if we be not firſt wanting to our ſelves.

Hoping therefore, that this Conſideration of Chriſt's Promiſe to us, will have its deſir'd effect upon us of the Clergy; I ſhall in the next place ſhew what uſe others alſo may, and ought to make of it. And for that end, ſhall apply my ſelf unto you all. Seeing therefore, that our Lord hath Promiſed to be with his Apoſtles and their Succeſſors to the end of the World: Seeing the Succeſſion of the Office Apoſtolical, hath without interruption been continued in our Church to this Day. And ſeeing therefore that Chriſt according to his Promiſe, is alway preſent by his Holy Spirit

at the Word and Sacraments, as Administred by our Church, to quicken, actuate, and make them effectual to the Salvation of our Souls; hence in his Name, and for his Sake, and your own too, I humbly pray and beseech you all, that you would take all the opportunities you can, to meet your Lord and Saviour in the publick Offices of the Church, to which he hath thus promised his peculiar Presence. And think it not enough to be there, but consider all the while in whose Presence you are, and deport your selves accordingly. And while we Read or Preach the Gospel, call upon you, exhort and pray you to observe whatsoever Christ hath Commanded, still remember the Apostles words, that *we are Ambassadours for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. And therefore receive it not as the word of Man, but, as it is indeed, the Word of God himself.

Above all things, take heed, that you have not Mens Persons in admiration, so as to think the Word and Sacraments one jot the better or worse, because Administred by one Person rather than another. For they that do so, it is evident, that they regard the Person more than the Office, and then it is no wonder if they receive no bene-

benefit or advantage from it. For all the hopes and expectations that we have or can have, from the exerciſe of any Eccleſiaſtical Office, by whomſoever perform'd, are grounded only upon Chriſt's Promiſe to the Office it ſelf, to be preſent with it by his Holy Spirit; without which, all the fine Words and Phraſes in the World, can never mortifie one Luſt, nor convert one Soul to God and Goodneſs. And therefore ye, whenſoever you addreſs your ſelves to the publick Prayers of our Church, to hear God's Word Read, or Preach'd, or to receive the Holy Sacrament, ſtill keep the Eye of your Faith fix'd upon Chriſt, as there really preſent, according to his Promiſe, ready to diſpenſe his Heavenly Bleſſings, by his Holy Spirit, working together with the Ordinance, to make it accompliſh the end of its Inſtitution, even your Sanctification in this World, and your Eternal Salvation in the World to come. Do but obſerve theſe few Rules, in all your ſolemn Devotions as perform'd by that part of the Catholick Church, which by the Bleſſing of Almighty God is ſettled amongſt you, and then I dare aſſure you in the Name of my Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, that you will all experience the Truth of what you have now heard, even that Chriſt is always preſent with his Apoſtles in the

discharge of their Office to the end of the World.

Moreover, from the Premises duly weighed, you may all very easily observe, what reason you all have, to continue stedfast in the Communion of our Church, wherein the Word and Sacraments are so powerfully and effectually Administred, and not to deviate from her, either into Popery on the one hand, or Schism on the other. For, as for Popery, altho' we do not deny but that the Apostolical Succession hath been continued in the Church of *Rome*, yet we cannot but affirm also, that they have made very bad use of it, or rather have most egregiously abused it, having clogged the several Offices with so many superstitious Ceremonies, that they quench the Spirit which should enflame, and quicken them, or else perform them so imperfectly and irregularly, that they are not the same that were instituted by Christ, and so not capable of having this Promise fulfilled to them. I shall instance only in two, the Reading of the Scriptures, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

As for the first, The publick and solemn Reading of the Word of God, by a Minister of Christ, lawfully ordain'd and appointed thereunto, I look upon it as a thing

of much greater consequence, than it is commonly thought to be: Yea, I cannot but reckon it amongst the most useful and prevalent means of Grace that we do or can enjoy. For altho' it be our Duty to read the Scriptures in Private, which I hope you all do, yet none of you but may find by experience, that a Chapter once read in Publick, as before describ'd, is of greater force, and makes deeper impressions upon you, than if you run it ten times over by your selves. And the reason is, because the same Spirit, which indited the Scriptures, accompanies such solemn Reading of them, and sets it home upon the Hearts and Consciences of them that hear it. So that besides the Majesty and Authority that appears in the Scriptures themselves, as they are the very Word of God, much more than any Exposition of them can be, there is likewise at such a time the Power and Efficacy of the Spirit of Christ then present, to press and enforce it upon the Minds of all such as duly attend to the Reading of them. But now, in the Church of *Rome* all this is lost. For altho' they read the Scriptures indeed, yet they read them as they do their Prayers, in an unknown Tongue, at least to the greatest part of the Congregation, and commonly to the very Reader himself. By which

means the People are depriv'd, not only of the Scriptures themſelves, but likewiſe of the Aſſiſtance of God's Spirit, which otherwiſe would accompany the Reading of them. For as they order the Matter, the Spirit of God himſelf cannot make his own Word effectual to their Salvation without a Miracle. He muſt firſt give them the gift of Tongues, and make them underſtand a Language they never learn'd, before it is poſſible for him to make his own Word of any uſe or advantage to them. For he never works upon our Minds, but in a way ſuitable to our Natures, as we are rational Creatures, ſo as firſt to clear up our Apprehenſions of the Good he propounds to us, and ſo incline our Wills to the Embracement of it. But where the Word of God is propounded in an unknown Tongue, it is impoſſible for the People to have any Apprehenſions of it at all, for the Spirit of God to work upon, and to clear up ſo as to influence the Will by them. By which means the Word of God it ſelf is made of little or no effect to thoſe who live in the Communion of that Church.

The ſame Reaſon holds good alſo, as to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as Adminiſtred by the *Romiſh Church*. For the whole Office belonging to it, is wrapt

up

up in a Language the People do not underſtand, and therefore know not what the Prieſt ſaith, nor whether he Conſecrates the Hoſt or no; only they ſee him perform a great many Ceremonies as unintelligible as the Language he ſpeaks. And at length he puts a Wafer into their Mouths. Now what is there in all this, that the Spirit of God can make uſe of to the Comfort and Edification of the People? Eſpecially, conſidering that the Prieſt intends not to Miniſter the Spirit of Chriſt unto them, but only his real Body, as they are bound to believe the Wafer to be. But if it was poſſible, as it neither is, nor can be, to convert the Bread into the Body of Chriſt, and give it to the People, what good could that do them, if abſtracted from the Spirit? For as our Lord himſelf ſaith, *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the Fleſh profiteth nothing*, Joh. 6. But after all this, I do not ſee how the Promiſe of the Spirit can belong to the Sacrament, as they manage it. For the Promiſe is made not to any one part of it as diſtinct from the other, but to the whole, as it was inſtituted by Chriſt. And where the Inſtitution is not rightly obſerved, neither can the Promiſe annexed to it, be perform'd. But it is plain, that our Saviour inſtituted the Cup as well as the Bread. And it is as

plain,

plain, that the Church of *Rome* Administers the Bread only, and not the Cup. And therefore they, by depriving the People of one half of the Communion, do thereby deprive them of the Comfort and Benefit of the whole.

And therefore were there no other, as there are many Arguments to deter sober and considering Men from the Communion of that Church, this, one would think, is of it self sufficient to do it; even because those great means of Grace, the Word and Sacrament it self are so Administred by it, as to be made of no use at all to the People.

And as for Schism, they certainly hazard their Salvation at a strange rate, who separate themselves from such a Church as ours is, wherein the Apostolical Succession, the Root of all Christian Communion, hath been so entirely preserved, and the Word and Sacraments are so effectually Administred; and all to go into such Assemblies and Meetings as can have no pretence to the great Promise in my Text. For it is manifest, that this Promise was made only to the Apostles and their Successors to the end of the World. Whereas in the private Meetings, where their Teachers have no Apostolical or Episcopal Imposition of Hands, they have no ground

to

to pretend to ſucceed the Apoſtles, nor by conſequence any right to the Spirit which our Lord here promiſeth; without which, altho' they Preach their Hearts out, I do not ſee what Spiritual Advantage can accrue to their Hearers by it. And therefore whatſoever they may think of it, for my own part, I would not be without this Promiſe of our Saviour for all the World, as knowing, that not only my ſelf, but the whole Catholick Church is highly concern'd in it: It being by virtue of this Promiſe, that the Church is continually acted, guided, and aſſiſted by the Spirit of God, and ſo the ordinary means of Grace are made effectual to Salvation, which otherwiſe would be of no force or efficacy at all. And therefore to ſpeak modeſtly, they muſt needs run a very great hazard, that cut themſelves off from ours, and by conſequence from the Catholick Church, and ſo render themſelves uncapable of receiving any benefit from this Promiſe, or from the means of Grace which they do or may enjoy.

Upon theſe therefore, and ſuch like conſiderations, which this Text will readily ſuggeſt to your ſerious and more retired Thoughts. I humbly adviſe and beſeech you all in the Name of Chriſt your Saviour, and as you do tender your Salvation by him,

him, that you would not hearken unto thoſe, who go about to ſeduce you from our Church, but that you would continue firm and faithful to it. For ſo long as you do ſo, I dare undertake for you, that you are in the ready way to Heaven. But if you once forſake that, whither you will next go, I know not; no, nor you neither.

But when I ſpeak of your continuing firm and faithful to our Church, I do not mean that you ſhould only talk high for her, much leſs inveigh againſt her Adverſaries, or damn all thoſe, who are not of her Communion; for this is contrary to the Divine and Apoſtolical Spirit that is in her, which is a Spirit of Meekneſs, and Soberneſs, and Charity. But my meaning is, that you firmly believe whatſoever ſhe, from the Word of God propounds as an Article of Faith, and faithfully perform whatſoever ſhe, from the ſame Word requires as a neceſſary Duty to God or Man, and by conſequence ſo live in the Communion of our Church, as to live up to the Rules and Conſtitutions of it.

And oh! that all we, who are here preſent, and all that profeſs to be of our Church, whereſoever they are, would for the future do ſo! What an Holy, what an Happy People ſhould we then be?

How

How Pious towards God, how Loyal to our Soveraign, how Juſt and Charitable towards all Men? This would be the way to convince our Adverſaries of their Errors and Miſtakes, when they ſee how far we excel them in Vertue and good Works. And this would be the way too, to ſecure our Church againſt all the attempts that Men or Devils can make upon her. For then our Lord himſelf would delight to dwell amongſt us, and be always preſent with us, not only by his Spirit, but likewiſe by his Power too. And if he be with us, we need not fear what Fleſh can do againſt us; ſo that we may lay it down as a moſt certain Truth, that our Church can never be deſtroyed but by it ſelf. For if we do not firſt fail of performing our Duty unto him, be ſure Chriſt will never fail of performing his Promiſe unto us. But how Proud, how Malicious ſoever our Adverſaries are, and whatſoever Deſigns they may carry on againſt us, he that ſitteth in the Heavens will laugh them to ſcorn, our Lord will have them in deriſion: He will abate their Pride, aſſwage their Malice, or elſe confound their Devices, ſo as to make them fall themſelves into the ſame Pit that they dig for others. And notwithſtanding all their endeavours to the contrary, he will ſettle

our

our Church upon ſuch Foundations, that the Gates of Hell it ſelf ſhall never be able to prevail againſt it. Neither will he only continue his Church to us, but likewiſe his Spirit to our Church, ſo always to perform this Promiſe in my Text, *Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.*

Amen. *O Bleſſed Jeſu, thou Eternal Son of God; to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be everlaſting Honour, Praiſe and Glory, from this Time forth, and for evermore.*

SERMON

SERMON II.

Acts i. 26.

And they gave forth their Lots, and the Lot fell upon Matthias. *And he was numbred with the Eleven Apoſtles.*

THIS Portion of Scripture appointed for the Epiſtle this Day, ſuits as well with the Work that is to be now done, as it doth with the Day for which it is appointed. It is appointed for the Feaſt of St. *Matthias*, whoſe Memory we this Day celebrate, of whom we here read, that he was taken into the number of Apoſtles, in the Church of Chriſt. And there are ſeveral Perſons here preſent, to be ordained now into the ſacred Miniſtry of the ſame Church, whereof he was ordained an Apoſtle. And therefore I ſhall not inſiſt upon the Words themſelves

themſelves, but I ſhall take Occaſion from hence to diſcourſe of Ordination in general, under which, that of St. *Matthias* in particular will come in of Courſe.

Now by Ordination in general, I mean, the ſetting apart ſome certain Perſons to direct, govern, aſſiſt, and influence others in the publick Worſhip of Almighty God, and to adminiſter ſuch Means unto them, as he hath appointed for their eternal Salvation. Concerning which, we ſhall conſider two things, *Firſt*, the Neceſſity of it, and then the Way and Manner of performing it.

As to the *Firſt*, we need not ſay much, it being a thing that Mankind in general ſeems to be agreed in. For as there is no Nation in the World, but where they profeſs ſome kind of Religion or other, ſo there is no Religion profeſſed in the World, but where they have ſome Perſons or other ſet apart for the Celebration of the ſeveral Rites and Ceremonies in it, without which, indeed it is impoſſible that any Religion ſhould ſubſiſt. For if no places were ſet apart for the Worſhip of God, Men would ſoon worſhip him no where; if no Times, they would never worſhip him; ſo if no Perſons were ſet apart for it, none would ever do it at all, at leaſt, not ſo as they ought.

And

And if it be ſo in Natural, how much more in Revealed Religion, of which this ſeems to be one of the integral or eſſential Parts, without which, it is not that Religion which God hath revealed. For whenſoever he, the great Creator and Governour of the World, hath revealed his Will and Pleaſure to his Creatures, how he would have them worſhip and ſerve him that made them: He hath ſtill at the ſame time conſtituted certain Officers amongſt them, to aſſiſt them in it; which Officers being, as it were, his own Domeſticks, or immediate Servants, or Miniſters, waiting continually upon himſelf and his Service, he always hath reſerved to himſelf the Conſtitution or Ordination of them; not ſuffering any one that had a mind to it, to meddle with any thing belonging to the ſaid Offices, without his Leave and Order firſt obtained. And if any preſume to do it, he doth not only make what they do void and of no Effect, but he puniſheth them ſeverely for it: as we find by many Inſtances in holy Scripture.

Hence the Apoſtle ſaith, *no Man taketh this Honour unto himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron, Heb.* 5. 4. That is, no Man can be really a Prieſt, a Miniſter of God, as *Aaron* was, but ſuch as are called and conſtituted by God himſelf, as

he was. And they that do undertake the ſaid Miniſtry, without ſuch a Call, whatſoever they may fancy or pretend, they are not God's Miniſters, and therefore all they do is in vain, and to no Purpoſe, as the Apoſtle ſaith elſewhere, *How ſhall they preach, except they be ſent*, *Rom.* 10. 15. They may ſpeak the ſame Words, deliver the ſame Truths, preſs the ſame Duties, as they do who are really God's Miniſters; but this is not Preaching, properly ſo called; they do not publiſh and proclaim the Will of God, with any Power or Authority over their Hearers, for they have received none from God, as not being called and ſent by him.

This the Apoſtles and firſt Diſciples of our bleſſed Saviour, were ſo ſenſible of, that when they wanted an Apoſtle, altho' there were doubtleſs many excellent Perſons among them that might think themſelves fit for the Place, yet none of them would undertake it of their own Heads; but they all, with one accord, left it to Almighty God, to determine and declare whom he had choſen and called to it; who having, by his Diſpoſal of the Lots they caſt, accordingly acquainted them, that *Matthias* was the Perſon he pitched upon, he was preſently numbred with the Apoſtles.

But all this will appear more clearly under the second Head, which I design principally to consider, and that is, the way and manner whereby God hath been pleased to ordain and set apart Persons for his own Service and Ministry. In speaking to which, I shall not trouble you with any Conjectures how this was done in the Church before *Moses*'s time, but shall begin there, where we have a certain Rule to walk by.

In the Day therefore that the Lord smote all the First-Born in the Land of *Ægypt*, he sanctified to himself all the First-Born among the Children of *Israel*, *Numb.* 3. 13. But afterwards, instead of them, he took one whole Tribe, even the Tribe of *Levi*, *ver.* 12. They being about the same number with the First-Born of all *Israel*. For all the Males of the Tribe of *Levi*, from a Month old and upwards, were numbred 22000. and all the First-Born of the Males among the Children of *Israel*, were 22273. So that all the First-Born Males of *Israel*, were only 273. more than the *Levites*, which odd number being redeemed at 5 Sheckles apiece by the Poll, the whole Tribe of *Levi* was from thenceforward set apart to be employed wholly in the Service of God, instead of all the First-Born in *Israel*, *Num.* 3. 8. And out of this Tribe

he chose one Family, even that of *Aaron*, to minister continually to him in the Priests Office, to burn Incense, to slay and offer Sacrifices, to instruct the People in his Law, and the like. And out of this Family he chose *Aaron* himself; and so the First-Born of that Family all along, to be his High-Priest. To whom he appointed not only the Oversight of all the rest, but likewise some certain Offices, which no other Priests or *Levites* could meddle with.

So that we here have three distinct Orders of Men settled and established by God himself to minister unto him, The High-Priest, the Priests, and the *Levites*. Which last, in *Moses*'s time, were employed wholly about the Tabernacle and the Vessels belonging to it; but when the Temple was built, they were also made Treasurers, and Judges, and Porters, and Singers, 1 *Chron.* 23. 4.

Now God having thus constituted these several Orders of Men for his own Service, he gave Directions how they should be all consecrated to their several Offices. *First*, *Aaron* by himself, as the High-Priest, then his Sons as the second or ordinary Priests, *Levit.* 8. And afterwards the *Levites*, *Num.* 8. By which Consecration, not only the Persons then in being, but their Posterity were all ordained into the same

Offices

Offices that they themſelves were. By *Aaron*'s Ordination into the Office of High-Prieſt, the Firſt-Born or eldeſt Sons of his Family, were ordained ſo too. By his Sons Conſecration, all their Sons, or the younger Sons of that Family were ordained Prieſts. And ſo for the *Levites*, when they were conſecrated, all the Males that ſhould ever proceed from them, were conſecrated together with them, as being then contained in their Loins. So that although there might be ſome certain Ceremonies uſed at their entring upon the Execution of their Office, when they came to Years of Diſcretion, yet they were not properly ordained or conſecrated again; but the Office came to them in Courſe, or if you will *ex traduce*. The Ordination, which their Anceſtors had from God himſelf, being, by virtue of this Inſtitution and Command, propagated and derived down to them. And thus it continued all along, during the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation, which was about 2000 Years, even until the Death of our Bleſſed Saviour; which being typified and foreſhewn by the Sacrifices which theſe Prieſts offered, the Prieſthood it ſelf muſt needs continue in Force and Virtue till that was accompliſhed.

And therefore all the while that Chriſt lived, he made no Alteration at all in it,

neither did he ever properly abrogate, or repeal the Laws that were formerly made about it, but when he died, they expired together with him. Both the Time and the End for which they were made, being now accomplished. But from that time forward, though the *Jewish* Nation ſtill continued till the Deſtruction of *Hieruſalem*, which was 40 Years after, yet they had not really any Prieſthood among them. The Time for which it was ordained, being now expired.

When our Lord therefore was upon Earth, foreſeeing that all the *Moſaic* Orders would ceaſe in courſe upon his death, and knowing that his Church could never ſubſiſt without ſome ſuch Orders of Men ſet apart for the Adminiſtration of his Word and Sacraments; before he died, he took care to lay the Platform of others, ſuitable to his own Religion. For which Purpoſe, out of the many Diſciples that followed him, he firſt choſe twelve Apoſtles; to whom he gave Commiſſion to baptize, to preach the Goſpel, and to work Miracles for the Confirmation of it, *Matt.* 10. And afterwards he ſent out 70 other Diciples, and gave them Power alſo to preach the Goſpel, and caſt out Devils in his Name, *Luke* 10. So that he ſtill kept up the ſame number of Orders in his Church

whilſt

whilst himself lived, that was in the *Jewish* Church: For he himself was truly the High-Priest, of whom they under the Law were only Types. Then there were the 12 Apostles; answerable to the Priests of the second Order; and the 70 Disciples, resembling the great number of *Levites*.

But all this while we do not read that the Apostles had any solemn Consecration to their Office, during our Saviour's Life. It is said indeed in *Mark* 3. 14. that he ordained 12. but the Words are ἐποίησε δώδεκα, he made, or appointed 12. to be his Apostles, or Messengers. But we do not find that he ordained them, so as to confer any Sacerdotal Power upon them. He promis'd indeed St. *Peter*, and the rest of the Apostles with him, that he would give them the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, *Matt.* 16. But they were as yet in the hands of the *Levitical* Priesthood, and he would not take them from thence to give them to his Apostles, so long as that Priesthood continued in force. But he was no sooner dead and risen again, but he presently performed his Promise. For then the *Levitical* Priesthood being expired; and by Consequence the Keys, which he had before committed to it by his Servant *Moses*, returning on course into his own Hands, he then according to his Promise gave them to his Apostles.

For upon the ſame Day that he roſe again, in the Evening, his Apoſtles being met together, he came to them, and ſaid to them, *Peace be unto you: as my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you. And when he had ſaid this, he breathed on them, and ſaid unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghoſt. Whoſe ſoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whoſe ſoever Sins ye retain, they are retained,* *John* 20. 21, 22, 23. As my Father ſent me, even ſo ſend I you; that is, As my Father ſent me to preach the Goſpel, by anointing me with his Holy Spirit, *Iſa.* 61. 1. *Luke* 4. 18. even ſo, after the ſelf ſame manner I ſend you; *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt*, at the ſpeaking of which Words, he breathed upon them, and ſo iſſued forth the Holy Spirit from himſelf into them. Which, as it is an undeniable Argument of the Spirit's Proceſſion from the Son as well as from the Father; ſo it was the higheſt and trueſt Conſecration of the Apoſtles that could be, far beyond that of *Aaron* and his Sons. For they were anointed only with material Ointment, which was poured upon *Aaron*'s Head, *Levit.* 8. 12. and ſprinkled afterwards upon his and his Son's Garments, together with the Blood of the Sacrifice, ver. 30. But this was only a Type of that holy Spirit wherewith the Apoſtles were anointed by our Lord, when he breathed

breathed it immediately from himself into them.

And now were the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, according to the Promise before-mentioned, given to the Apostles. And therefore our Lord, after he had breathed upon them, saying, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, he presently adds, *Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* Whereby all Sacerdotal Power was now conferred upon the Apostles, even whatsoever is necessary to the Government and Edification of the Church to the World's end. And therefore immediately before his Ascension, the Eleven Apostles being met together again, in the place that he appointed them, our Lord goes to them again, and saith, *All Power is given to me both in Heaven and Earth. Go ye therefore and make all Nations my Disciples, by baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And Lo, I am alway with you to the end of the World.* That is, I, by my holy Spirit which I have breathed into you, am now with you, and so I am always with you, and your Successors to the end of the World.

Now

Now the Apoſtles being thus ſolemnly Ordain'd and Conſecrated by Chriſt himſelf, and having receiv'd ſo ample a Commiſſion from him; ſoon after his Aſcenſion into Heaven, they with ſome other Diſciples, met together, and conſulted how to fill up their Number again. For *Judas Iſcariot*, who was one of the Twelve, by betraying his Maſter, had loſt both his Office and his Life, and another was now to take his Biſhoprick, or Apoſtleſhip, according to the Prophecy in the Book of *Pſalms*, which St. *Peter* put them in Mind of. And therefore they all agree to have the Number made up again out of theſe, who had, like the other Apoſtles, been converſant with our Bleſſed Saviour, all along from firſt to laſt. And they found two conſiderable Perſons among them, who had been ſo, *Joſeph*, ſirnamed *Juſtus*, and *Matthias*, both, in their apprehenſions, equally qualified for the Place. Yet nevertheleſs, they would not undertake to chuſe either of them. Foraſmuch as they themſelves, having been choſen by Chriſt himſelf, it was not fit to take any into their Number, but whom Chriſt himſelf had choſen. And therefore, they reſolved to refer it wholly unto him.

But how could that be done, now that Chriſt was gone from them into Heaven?

There

There was no other way but to caſt Lots which ſhould be the Perſon. A way that had been commonly uſed in ſuch caſes. For by the Command of God himſelf, Lots were caſt upon the two Goats, which ſhould be the Lords, and which ſhould be Scape-Goat, *Lev.* 16. The Land of *Canaan* was divided among the twelve Tribes by Lot, *Joſh.* 18. *Saul* was choſen King of *Iſrael* by Lot, 1 *Sam.* 10. The ſeveral Miniſtrations and Charges of the Prieſts, were divided amongſt them by Lot, 1 *Paral.* 24. 25. There are many ſuch Inſtances in the *Old Teſtament*, of referring doubtful Caſes to God's deciſion, by caſting Lots upon them: For, as the Wiſe Man ſaith, *The Lot is caſt into the Lap, but the whole diſpoſing thereof is of the Lord*, Prov. 16. 33.

This courſe therefore the Apoſtles took, to know which of theſe two Perſons our Lord would have taken into their Number; but before they caſt their Lots, they firſt Addreſs themſelves in a more ſolemn manner to Chriſt himſelf, ſaying, *Thou Lord, which knoweſt the Hearts of all Men, ſhew whether of theſe two thou haſt choſen, that he may take part of this Miniſtry and Apoſtleſhip, from which* Judas *by tranſgreſſion fell, that he might go to his own Place*; where we may obſerve, they do not pray that our Lord would chuſe one now, but that he would

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ſhew whether of the Two he had choſen already, for ſo the words run, ἐκ τύτων τῶν δύω ὃν ἕνα ἐξελέξω, which one of theſe Two thou haſt choſen, as ſuppoſing that he had choſen one of them already, tho' they did not know which. And therefore when they had caſt Lots, and the Lot was fallen upon *Matthias*, they took it for granted, as they well might, that he was the Perſon whom Chriſt had before choſen to be one of their Number, and therefore without any more ado, he was numbred with the Eleven Apoſtles, ſo as to make up the Number of Twelve again.

But here it may be asked, how this *Matthias* ſhould be an Apoſtle of equal Power with the other, ſeeing he was not preſent when the other were Ordain'd by our Saviour, and receiv'd the Spirit from him. So that I anſwer, that the ſame doubt may be made concerning St. *Thomas*, for neither was he preſent when our Lord breathed his Holy Spirit upon his other Apoſtles, and yet none ever deny'd, but that he was an Apoſtle of equal Authority with thoſe that were then preſent. And indeed, the Queſtion concerning both, may be clearly anſwered by a parallel Caſe: for we read, *Numb.* xi. how that when *Moſes* had, by the appointment of God, choſen Seventy of the Elders of *Iſrael* to be endow'd with

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his Spirit, and had order'd them to go to the Tabernacle of the Congregation, *the Lord came down in a Cloud, and ſpake unto him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the Seventy Elders; and it came to paſs, that when the Spirit reſted upon them, they Propheſied, and did not ceaſe. But two of the Seventy remain'd in the Camp,* Eldad, *and* Medad; and tho' they were not preſent, *the Spirit reſted upon them* alſo, and they Propheſied as well as the other. And this Remark is put upon them, that *they were of them that were written, but went not to the Tabernacle,* Numb. xi. 25, 26. The Caſe is the ſelf ſame here: For as *Eldad* and *Medad,* being choſen by *Moſes* into the Number of the Seventy, receiv'd the ſame Spirit which was given to the other Sixty Eight, altho' they were not preſent at the Place where the Lord came down in the Cloud to them; ſo here, *Thomas* and *Matthias* being in the Number of the Twelve which we choſen by our Lord to be his Apoſtles, altho' they were not preſent at the Place where our Lord gave the Holy Spirit to the other Ten, yet they receiv'd it as effectually to all intents and purpoſes as the other did. For whereſoever they were, the Holy Ghoſt breathed upon the Apoſtles as ſuch, reſted upon them alſo, becauſe they alſo were

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choſen into the Number of Apoſtles, even *Matthias* himſelf, as I obſerv'd before.

This formal Admiſſion of St. *Matthias* into the Number of the Apoſtles, was upon one of the Ten Days between the Aſcention of our Lord to Heaven, and the Deſcent of the Holy Spirit upon the Day of *Pentecoſt*, Act. 2. And then was fulfilled what our Saviour had Promiſed his Apoſtles, ſaying, *And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth*, Joh. 14. 16, 18. which therefore is call'd another Comforter, becauſe he was to ſupply our Saviour's Place and Preſence upon Earth; guide his Apoſtles into all Truth, and direct, aſſiſt, and order the Affairs of his Church, until his Coming again. And therefore it was, that now, upon the Day of *Pentecoſt*, he made, as it were, his publick Entrance into the Church, appearing Viſibly to the Diſciples, and enabling them to ſpeak all manner of Languages, in order to the Converſion of all Nations to the Faith of Chriſt.

Now this Holy Spirit of Chriſt, having thus taken upon him this Office, to ſhew that he could and would do for the Church whatſoever our Saviour himſelf, either would or could, was he ſtill preſent in Perſon,

ſon, as well as by this his Spirit: hence as he had choſen Twelve Apoſtles, his Spirit chuſes two others, in as plain and apparent a manner as Chriſt himſelf had done it. For there being *certain Prophets and Teachers in the Church at* Antioch, Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen *and* Saul; *as they Miniſtred to the Lord and Faſted, the Holy Ghoſt ſaid, Separate me* Barnabas *and* Saul, *for the Work whereunto I have called them*, Act. 13. 1, 2. From whence we may obſerve, that he had before this call'd them to the Work; and now he expreſly Commands the Prophets and Teachers there preſent, to ſeparate, or ſet them apart for it. He did not employ the Apoſtles that were Conſecrated by our Lord to do it, that their Conſecration might appear to be wholly from himſelf; and ſo the Church might reſt fully ſatisfied, that altho' our Saviour, the Head of it, be gone to Heaven, yet he hath ſtill, and always will have one upon Earth, that can Exerciſe his Power ſo effectually, that he himſelf may be truly ſaid to be always with it, as he ſaid he would. But howſoever, notwithſtanding that he himſelf had called them, yet he would have them publickly Ordain'd by the Perſons beforemention'd, ſuppos'd to be the Biſhops of *Syria*, to ſhew that whatſoever Call from him, any ſhould

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afterwards pretend to; yet he would never employ them in his Work and Miniſtry, until they were publickly Ordain'd, and Separated for it, by the Governours of the Church empower'd by him to do it. And then he would have it done too by the Impoſition of Hands, to ſhew that this was the way that he had appointed for it. For it is ſaid, that *when they had Faſted, and Prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they ſent them away*, verſe 30. or as the word ἀπέλυσαν ſignifies, they diſmiſſed them, or let them depart: For they were not properly ſent by them, but by the Holy Ghoſt, as it is expreſly ſaid in the following words; ſo then they being ſent forth, ἐκπεμφθέντες, were ſent forth by the Holy Ghoſt, and as the Twelve were ſent by Chriſt, ſo were theſe two, *Barnabas* and *Saul*, ſent by his Holy Spirit, and ſo were as truly his Apoſtles as the other. And therefore one of them, even *Saul*, otherwiſe called *Paul*, is not only called an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, but ſaith expreſly, that he was ſo, *not of Men, nor by Man, but by Jeſus Chriſt, and God the Father*, Gal. 1. 1. becauſe he was thus ſent by the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, the ſame God with the Father and the Son.

From whence we may obſerve, by the way, upon what good grounds the laſt Re-

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visers of the *Common-Prayer*, added two new Holy Days in the Kalendar, which had been omitted in the former Editions, even the Conversion of St. *Paul*, and St. *Barnabas*'s Day; for these being Apostles of the same Power and Dignity with the other Twelve, there was all the Reason in the World that we should Commemorate and give God Thanks for them as well as for the other. But to distinguish them from the others, the Eves or Vigils of these Days, are not appointed to be observed so as those of the others are.

Now the Apostles being all thus Ordain'd and Consecrated by Christ's Holy Spirit, they were thereby Invested with full Power and Authority, not only to Preach and Propagate the Gospel, and to add to the Church daily such as should be saved, and to Rule and Govern the said Church at present, but likewise to Institute and Establish such Officers in it, by whom it may be rightly Govern'd according to our Saviour's Mind in all future Ages. In order whereunto, the Twelve first Instituted the Office of Deacons, upon occasion of the *Grecians* murmuring against the *Hebrews*, because their Widows were neglected in the daily Ministration. For, it not being fitting that the Apostles themselves should leave the Word to serve Tables,

they ordered seven Men of honest Report, to be chosen out for that Work; which seven being set before the Apostles, they Pray'd, and then laid their Hands on them, *Acts* 6. 6. By which Imposition of Hands, they received Power, not only to look after the Widows and Poor, but also to Baptize and Preach the Gospel. For *Stephen* who was one of the Seven, was no sooner Ordain'd, but we presently find him Preaching so powerfully, that the *Jews* were not able to resist the Wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake, *Acts* 6. 10. And *Philip* another of the Seven, Preached Christ so effectually to the *Samaritans*, that they receiv'd the Word gladly, and were Baptized of him, and so was the *Eunuch* too, that was Treasurer to *Candace*, Queen of the *Ethiopians*, Act. 8. And this Office of Deacons, thus Instituted by the Apostles, hath continued in the Church ever since, and so must do to the end of the World.

But these Deacons being Ordain'd only to Minister in the Church, the could have no share in the Government of it, which was the main thing that the Apostles were to take care of. And therefore considering that the Spirit, which they had receiv'd, must according to Christ's Promise, abide with his Church for ever, it was necessary

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they ſhould find out ſome way to Tranſfer it upon others, and ſo Succeſſively from one to another, to the Worlds end. Now they found by Experience, what they were doubtleſs directed to by the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, that upon whomſoever they laid their Hands, the Holy Ghoſt preſently fell upon them. Thus when *Philip*, the aforeſaid Deacon, had Converted and Baptized the *Samaritans*, the Apoſtles ſent *Peter* and *John* to them, who having Pray'd, and laid their Hands on them, they receiv'd the Holy Ghoſt, *Acts* 8. *Philip* did not ſo much as offer to lay his Hands upon them, and if he had, it would not have done the Work, becauſe he was only a Deacon, and none of the Apoſtles, who had ſo receiv'd the Holy Ghoſt themſelves, as to have Power to confer it upon others. As we find St. *Paul* alſo did, by laying his Hands upon the Diſciples at *Epheſus*, Act. 19.

Hence it is, that this Power always was, and ſtill is, appropriated only to the Apoſtles themſelves, and their Succeſſors, the Biſhops of the Church. And it is that which we now call Confirmation, when a Biſhop rightly Ordain'd, after the Example of the Holy Apoſtles, Prays for theſe that are Baptiz'd, and lays his Hand upon their Heads, that they may receive the Gifts and Graces of God's Holy Spirit, to

Confirm them in the Faith, and in all Goodneſs; which duly perform'd, is certainly as effectual now as ever, in thoſe who are rightly diſpos'd and qualifi'd for it; as, Bleſſed be God, we find at this very day, to our unſpeakable Comfort.

The Apoſtles therefore, finding by Experience that the Holy Ghoſt was given by the laying on of Hands, for the Confirmation of Believers; they could not but conclude this to be a proper way alſo, for the conferring of it upon thoſe who were to ſucceed them in the Government of the Church. Eſpecially conſidering, that this was the Way whereby *Joſhua*, by the Command of God himſelf, was conſtituted the Succeſſor of *Moſes*; for *Moſes* laid his Hands upon him, by which means the Spirit of Wiſdom came upon him, *Numb.* 27. *Deut.* 34. From whence this Rite was commonly uſed by the *Jewiſh Church*, in the Conſtitution of their Governours; and the Holy Ghoſt himſelf did not only approve of it, but appointed it to be uſed in the Ordination of *Barnabas* and *Saul*. Upon theſe and the like Conſiderations, the Apoſtles took this courſe for the conveying of the Spirit, which they had received, to their Succeſſors in all Ages. For the way whereby Chriſt beſtowed it upon the Twelve, by breathing on them, was

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proper and peculiar to himſelf, from whom the Spirit proceedeth. But this was a way which both they and their Succeſſors in all Ages would be capable of. For their Bodies, as well as Souls, being made the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt at their Conſecration, whenſoever they laid their Hands upon any Perſon, ſo as to touch his Body, with a deſign of tranferring the ſame Spirit upon him, it is eaſie to imagine, how ſuch a Perſon comes to be endow'd with it. Eſpecially, ſeeing the Holy Ghoſt had Inſtituted and Appointed this to be the way of doing it, and therefore it is impoſſible it ſhould ever fail. Inſomuch, that as the ſame Power which was given to *Aaron* at his Conſecration, was propagated and continued in that Church by ſucceſſive Generation from Father to Son, ſo long as the Church it ſelf laſted: So is the ſame Spirit and Power, which was given to the Apoſtles at their Conſecration, propagated and continued in the Church of Chriſt, by the ſucceſſive Impoſition of Hands from one to another, and will be, ſo long as the World endureth.

This therefore being the Method that the Holy Apoſtles, by the direction of the Spirit it ſelf, had agreed upon before their Diſperſions whereſoever any of them went, ſo ſoon as they had Converted any conſi-

derable Number to the Faith, enough to make a Church, before they departed from them, they ſtill laid their Hands upon one, whom the judg'd the fitteſt among them, and ſo left the ſame Spirit, which they themſelves had, with him, for the Government and Edification of that Church. For whoſoever was thus Ordain'd, did by that means receive the Spirit. And therefore, St. *Paul* having thus Ordain'd *Timothy* at *Epheſus*, in his ſecond Epiſtle to him, he uſeth theſe words, *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou ſtir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my Hands*, 2 Tim. 1. 6. And what this Gift of God was, he declares in the following words, ſaying, *For God hath not given us the Spirit of Fear, but of Power, and of Love, and of a ſound Mind.* As is he ſhould have ſaid, For that Spirit which God hath given us, even me and thee, is not a Spirit of Fear, but of Power, to inſtruct and govern the Church; of Love, to regulate our Paſſions in the doing it; and of a ſound Mind, to keep both ſtedfaſt in the Faith. Plainly implying, that by the Laying of his Hands upon him, God had given the ſame Spirit to *Timothy*, that he himſelf, the the Apoſtle, had.

But elſewhere, the ſame Apoſtle tells *Timothy*, that this Gift was given him by

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Prophecy, *with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*, 1 Tim. 4. 14. From whence it may seem, that some of the Elders of the Church join'd with St. *Paul*, in laying their Hands upon him; and yet St. *Paul* ascribes it wholly to the laying on of his Hands, and saith, the Gift was given him by that, and only with the other, because he being the only Apostle that laid on his Hands, and so the only Person that had Power by that means to confer the Holy Spirit; altho' it was given to him, together with the laying on of the others Hands upon him, yet it was not given by that, but by the laying on of St. *Paul*'s Hands, as he himself saith. As it is in our Church at this time, and so hath been in the *Latin* for many Ages, in the Ordination of a Priest; the Priests there present, join with the Bishop in their laying their Hands upon him, and yet he is Ordain'd only by the Bishop's laying on his Hands. For how many Priests soever lay their Hands upon another's Head, they can never make him a real Priest, unless there be a Bishop with them; but a Bishop, by the Imposition of his Hands, can make a Priest, altho' there be never another Priest with him. Neither doth the Law require, that any Priests should be present at such Ordination, but only that the Bishop, with the Priests pre-

ſent, (if there happen to be any) ſhall lay their Hands upon him that is to be Ordain'd, the Impoſition of the Prieſts Hands, being only to ſignifie their Conſent, that ſuch a Perſon ſhould be receiv'd into their Order, and ſo take off the blame from the Biſhop, in caſe he ſhould prove to have been unworthy of it. But ſtill, it is only by the Impoſition of the Biſhop's Hands that he is made a Prieſt, as St. *Paul* ſaith, that *Timothy* receiv'd the Spirit, by the laying on of his Hands, notwithſtanding that the *Presbytery* join'd with him in it.

But of this, the Spirit's being given by ſuch Impoſition of Hands, ſo that it is by him Principally that the Perſon is Ordain'd, we have a very remarkable inſtance in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, *Chap.* 20. where we read how St. *Paul* having Ordain'd many Elders or Biſhops in *Aſia*, he ſummon'd them to a Viſitation that he held at *Miletus*, and in the Charge he gave them, among other Things, he ſaid, *Take heed therefore to your ſelves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers*, or Biſhops, *ver.* 28. For from hence it appears, that when they were Ordain'd by the Impoſition of the Apoſtles Hands, the Holy Ghoſt ſo came upon them, that he Conſtituted them in the Office they were

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Ordain'd to: It was he that made them Biſhops; the Apoſtle, and whoſoever elſe might join with him in laying on of Hands, were only his Inſtruments, the Holy Ghoſt was the principal Agent. And ſo queſtionleſs he is, and always will be, in all ſuch Ordinations. So that all who are regularly Ordain'd, may be truly and properly ſaid to receive their Power and Commiſſion from the Holy Ghoſt, that is then conferr'd upon them, and ſo from Chriſt himſelf.

Having thus conſidered the Courſe that the Apoſtles, by Chriſt's Direction, took and inſtituted in the Church, for the conferring of Holy Orders, ſo as that they might transfer the ſame Spirit which they themſelves receiv'd, upon thoſe who were admitted unto them, and ſo continue it in the Church for ever: We may further obſerve, that beſides that of Deacons before-mention'd, they found it neceſſary to Eſtabliſh two other Orders in the Church, to remain through all Ages; firſt their own, which we now call the Order of Biſhops, who are therefore by the Ancients commonly term'd the Apoſtles Succeſſors, becauſe that by a ſucceſſive Impoſition of Hands, continued all along from the Apoſtles themſelves, they receive the ſame Spirit and Power which the Apoſtles had, not only

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for the Administration of the Word and Sacraments, but likewise for the Government of the Church, and for the conferring of the Holy Spirit by the Imposition of their Hands, as the Apostles did, both for the Confirmation of Believers, and likewise for the Ordination of Persons into their own and other Offices in the Church.

The other Order, is that of Priest-hood, which being Instituted for the due Administration of all the ordinary means of Grace, it was necessary, that they who were admitted into this Order also, should have the Holy Ghost, the Fountain of all Grace conferred upon them, to influence their several Administations, without which it is impossible they should ever attain their end. And hence it is, that according to the Practice of the Catholick and Apostolick Church, tho' not in that of Deacons, yet in the Ordination of Priests, as you will see presently, the Bishop when he lays his Hand severally upon every one that receives that Order, he saith, *Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our Hands; whose Sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven, and whose Sins thou dost retain, they are retained.* Where we may observe, that altho' some other words are inserted to determine

termine and distinguish the Office committed to them, yet all the same words are repeated, which our Lord himself used at the Ordination of his Apostles; which the Catholick Church always judg'd necessary, not only in Imitation of our Blessed Saviour, but likewise, because that the Persons who are Ordain'd Priests in his Church, are to Preach the same Word, Administer the same Sacraments, and Exercise the same Power in the Censures of the Church as the Apostles themselves did. And therefore it is necessary that they should be endu'd with the same Spirit, Ordain'd after the same manner, and entrusted with the same Power of the Keys, as the Apostles themselves were. By which Means, the Means of Grace and Salvation Administred by Priests thus Ordain'd, become as effectual to those that use them aright, as when they were Administred by the Apostles themselves. The Spirit, which they recieve by this Imposition of Hands, being always ready to assist at their several Administrations, and to Bless and Sanctifie them to those who are duly prepared and disposed for them.

Now from what we have thus briefly, as the Occasion would permit, discours'd upon this Subject; I shall draw only two inferences; whereof the first concerns those

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who are now to be admitted into Holy Orders, either Priests or Deacons. For from what ye have now heard, ye may easily see the Duty as well as Dignity of the Office you are call'd to, to be Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the manifold Mysteries of God. And therefore I hope you have prepar'd your selves, according to the directions that have been given you, by Prayer and Fasting, for so great an Undertaking; and so are both duly dispos'd to receive the Power and Spirit that shall be committed to you, and also fully resolved by the Grace of God, to exercise and improve it for your Master's use. For which Purpose, as I do not doubt, but you have seriously consider'd what Questions will be Propounded to you, and what Answers ye must give to them; so I must entreat you to keep it always in your Minds, how solemnly you this Day devoted your selves to the Service of God and his Church, and what Vows and Promises you made in his Presence, to be diligent in Praying, in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in framing your Lives accordingly, in Ministring the Doctrine, the Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord Commanded, and as this Church and Realm hath received the same; to drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrines, and to Maintain

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and ſet forward, as much as in you lies; Quietneſs, Love and Peace, among Chriſtian People, and reverently to obey your Ordinary, and thoſe to whom is committed the Charge and Government over you. If ye do theſe things according as ye then Promiſe, ye will ſave both your ſelves and them that hear you; but otherwiſe, after all your Preaching unto others, you your ſelves will be Caſt-aways.

The other Inference reſpects all here preſent. For from the Premiſes duly weighed, you cannot but all infer, both the Neceſſity and Dignity of thoſe Holy Orders which are now to be conferred. The Neceſſity, in that the means of Salvation cannot be Adminiſtred effectually without them; and the Dignity, in that they are effectually Adminiſtred by them. Upon which account, you cannot but acknowledge, there is a real Honour and Reſpect due to thoſe who are thus Ordain'd, though not for their own, yet for their Office ſake, and for his ſake, whoſe Officers and Miniſters they are, in conveying the greateſt Bleſſings to you, that you are, or ever can be capable of.

Wherefore, as St. *Paul* ſaid to *Timothy*, *Let no Man deſpiſe thy Youth*, 1 Tim. 4. 12. So ſay I to you, Do not deſpiſe Chriſt's Clergy for their Youth, or Poverty, or upon

on any other account whatsoever. But esteem them as ye ought for his sake whose Clergy they are. And thank God that you have such a Clergy among you, as is Ordain'd according to Christ's own Institution, and endu'd with the same Spirit which he breathed into his Holy Apostles, handed down from them to us, by a continued and uninterrupted Succession. Which is the great Glory of our Church, and that which you can never sufficiently thank God for. As considering, that by this means you have the Word and Sacraments so truly and powerfully Administred among you, that nothing but the extream Neglect of your selves, can hinder any of you from being Happy for ever.

But that you may all be so, you must not think it enough, that you have such a Clergy Ordain'd among you, nor that the Means of Grace are so duly and regularly Administred to you, but you must Exercise your selves continually in them, otherwise your having of them will signifie nothing, unless it be to sink you lower into the the Abyss of Misery. Neither must you use only some, but all the Means that are appointed for the begetting or increasing of true Grace and Vertue in you. For if you neglect any, you had even as good neglect all. One being as necessary

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in its kind as another, and all assisting one another, in order to the Attainment of the End. And after all, tho' you use the Means, and all the Means, you must use them only as Means; and therefore, not rest in them, nor trust on them, but only upon him, who hath appointed them, and hath sent his Holy Spirit to move in them, to make them effectual to the Purposes for which they are used.

Do but this, and you will soon find, by your own Experience, what infinite cause you have to Bless God for your living in a Church where Holy Orders are conferred, and by consequence the means of Salvation Administred so exactly, according to the Institution and Appointment of Christ our Saviour; To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

SERMON

SERMON III.

2 Cor. iv. 1.

Therefore seeing we have this Ministry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not.

THE last publick Ordination that was held here, happening upon St. *Matthias*'s Day, from his formal and solemn Admission into the number of the Apostles, I took Occasion to discourse in general of the publick Admission of Persons to serve in the sacred Ministry of Christ's Church, which we now call Ordination; shewing both the Necessity of it, and likewise the antient way and manner of performing it. Now this falling out upon St. *Matthias*'s Day, who was both an Apostle and Evangelist, I have chosen this part of the Epistle ap-

pointed for the Day, from whence to treat briefly of our Admiſſion into the Miniſtry of the Goſpel here ſpoken of, as it is now celebrated in our Church, according to the antient Way and Manner before-mentioned.

But before we come to that, we muſt obſerve, that the Apoſtle having, in the foregoing Chapter, fully declared and proved the Excellency of the Evangelical Miniſtry beyond that of the Legal. He thence infers, that he and others, with whom this glorious Miniſtry was entruſted, having received ſo great a Mercy, did not faint, or grow weary in the Execution of it, nor were ever diſcouraged by any Straights or Difficulties they met with in it, as being fully perſuaded, that their faithful Performance of their Duty in it, was a Matter of that extraordinary Conſequence, both to themſelves and others, that all the Troubles that could ever befal them for it, ſhould never in the leaſt diſhearten them; but they were reſolved, whatſoever came of it, faithfully to diſcharge the Truſt that was repoſed in them. *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy we faint not.*

And this certainly is left upon Record, as a ſtanding Rule for the Miniſters of the Goſpel to walk by in all Ages and places

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of the World; especially those of our Church, who have the same Ministry or Authority to administer the Word and Sacraments conferred upon them, which the Apostle here speaks of, by being ordain'd regularly, according to the way and manner which the Apostles themselves, by the Direction of Christ and his holy Spirit, instituted in his Church, and with all the Care and Diligence, with all the Decency and Order, with all the Piety and Devotion that can be used or exercised upon any Occasion whatsoever.

But this being that which I principally intend to insist upon at this time; without any further Preface or Apology, I shall, by the Assistance of God, run through the whole Office of our Church for the Ordination of Deacons and Priests, and shew the Excellency of the Course and Method she takes for the admitting any of her Members into the Ministry of the Gospel; that so they who are to be ordained, may understand what great Obligations lie upon them, not to be either Idle, or Faint-hearted, but Diligent and Couragious in the Discharge of the Office committed to them; and all others may see what Cause they have to bless God, that they live in a Church, wherein the Apostolical Institution is so strictly observed, and so much Care taken

in the chuſing and ordaining thoſe who are to have the Charge of their Souls,

Firſt, therefore that all the pious and devout Members of the Church diſperſed over the whole Kingdom, may know the Times when it is to be done, and ſo improve the Intereſt they have in Heaven, for God's Bleſſing and Aſſiſtance in the Management of ſo great a Work. There are four ſet Days in every Year, all *Sunday*'s, appointed for it, and in the reſpective Weeks immediately foregoing, called *Ember Weeks*, three Days are ſet apart to be ſpent in Faſting and Prayer to God, that he would ſo guide and govern the Minds of his Servants, the Biſhops, and Paſtors of his Church, that they may lay Hands ſuddenly on no Man, but Faithfully and Wiſely make choice of fit Perſons to ſerve in the ſacred Miniſtry of his Church; and alſo that he would give his Grace and Heavenly Benediction to all that ſhall be then ordained to any holy Function, that both by their Life and Doctrine, they may ſet forth his Glory, and ſet forward the Salvation of all Men.

Now whilſt all good People are thus jointly imploring God's Aid and Direction of them in it, the Biſhops, in their ſeveral Dioceſes, are conſidering whom to chuſe; and examining the Fitneſs of thoſe who

offer themſelves to be admitted to any holy Function, either of Deacon or Prieſt, according to theſe general Rules which the Church for that purpoſe has laid down before them. As *Firſt*, That none ſhall be admitted Deacon, except he be 23 Years of Age, unleſs he have a Faculty: And every Man that is to be admitted Prieſt, ſhall be full 24 Years old. That none be ordained, either Deacon or Prieſt, who hath not firſt ſome certain Place where he may exerciſe his Function, *Can.* 33. nor except he ſubſcribe to the three Articles mentioned in *Can.* 36. that is, *Firſt*, to the King's Supremacy, in all Cauſes and over all Perſons, as well Eccleſiaſtical as Temporal. *Secondly*, to the Book of Common-Prayer, and ordering of Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons: that it contains nothing contrary to the Word of God; that it may be lawfully uſed, and that he himſelf will uſe that and none other. *Thirdly*, to the 39 Articles, acknowledging them to be all agreeable to the Word of God.

And beſides all this, none muſt be admitted to holy Orders, except he can give an Account of his Faith in Latin, according to the ſaid 39 Articles, and he be able to confirm the ſame, by ſufficient Teſtimonies out of the Holy Scriptures. And moreover, except he then exhibit Letters

Teſtimonial of his good Life and Converſation, under the Seal of ſome College in *Cambridge* or *Oxford*, where he remained before, or elſe of three or four grave Miniſters, together with the Subſcription and Teſtimony of other credible Perſons, who have kuown his Life and Behaviour by the ſpace of three Years next before.

According to theſe Rules every Biſhop in his Dioceſe, either by himſelf, or ſome Miniſter deputed by him, is obliged to examine thoſe who come to be admitted into the Miniſtry of the Church; and if, upon due Examination and Enquiry, he find that they are of the Age required, have a real Title, ſubſcribe to the 39 Articles, and can give a good Account of their Faith, and good Proof of their ſober and pious Life; then he makes choice of them, otherwiſe he rejects them and lays them aſide as unfit for the Miniſtry.

When any are thus approved of, and choſen by the Biſhop to be admitted into holy Orders, he appoints them to meet him at the Cathedral, or ſome Pariſh Church in his Dioceſe, where after Divine Service, and a Sermon fitted to the Occaſion, the Archdeacon or his Deputy preſents firſt thoſe who are to be admitted Deacons to him, as he ſits near to the Communion Table, in the Preſence of the whole

whole Congregation then preſent. Upon which the Biſhop adviſeth him to take heed that they whom he preſents, be apt and meet, for their Learning and godly Converſation, to exerciſe their Miniſtry duly, to the Honour of God, and the edifying of the Church. To which the Archdeacon anſwers, That he has enquired of them, as to their Lives, and examin'd them as to their Learning, and thinks them to be ſo, even apt and meet for the Miniſtry they undertake. After which, that the whole Congregation may be ſatisfied as well as the Biſhop, of their Fitneſs for the Office; he requires, that if any of them know any Impediment or notable Crime in any of the Perſons to be ordained, for which he ought not to be received into the Miniſtry, they would now come forth and ſhew what that Crime is. So that if any of you know any ſuch Crime or Impediment in any of the Perſons to be now ordained, it is your Fault if they be ordained, for you may hinder it if you will; nay, ye are bound to do it, by diſcovering what Objections ye have againſt it.

From whence ye may obſerve by the way, that whatſoever diſorderly or unworthy Perſons are admitted to holy Orders, ye muſt not blame the Biſhop, but your ſelves, or thoſe that know them for it.

For it cannot be ſuppoſed, that he ſhould have the Perſonal Knowledge of every one that comes to him for Orders; all that he can do, is to enquire of them, and conſider what Credit is to be given to the Letters Teſtimonial which they bring to him, wherein it may be poſſible for him to be impoſed upon. But they who do not only perſonally know them, but know them to be of ſo wicked and looſe a Converſation, that they ought not to be received into the Miniſtry, and yet do not acquaint the Biſhop with it, either before, or when he requires them to do it in the Face of the Congregation, they ought to bear all the Blame now, and muſt anſwer for it another Day.

After this, if no Crime be objected, the Biſhop, commending thoſe that are to be ordained, to the Prayers of the Congregation, he reads the *Litany* with a Clauſe inſerted in it, proper for the Occaſion, and ſo hath not only the joint Conſent of the whole Congregation, that they ſhould be ordained, but alſo their joint Prayers and Supplications to God for them. And then proceeding to the Communion-Service, after the Epiſtle, he adminiſters the Oath of Supremacy to them: Wherein they ſolemnly ſwear, that they utterly teſtify and declare, that the King is

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the only supream Governour of this Realm. And that no Foreign Prince or Prelate, and therefore no Bishop or Pope of *Rome*, hath, or ought to have any Authority, or Jurisdiction here. And that they utterly renounce all such Foreign Powers, and promise from henceforth, that they will bear Faith and true Allegiance to the King's or Queen's Highness, their Heirs, and lawful Successors, *&c.*

From which Oath, as imposed on all that are ordained, there are several things worthy to be observed. As *First*, how careful our Church is, that no Papist should be admitted into her Ministry; for he that takes this Oath doth *ipso facto* renounce Popery, for he renounceth the Pope himself, and all that Supremacy and Authority, he pretends to in this Kingdom. And then how ridiculous and absurd must it needs be for any to imagine that the Clergy of *England* should favour Popery, when they cannot be made Clergy-men without renouncing it. Hence also we may observe how strictly all that take this Oath are obliged to bear Faith and true Allegiance to the King or Queen and their Heirs and Successors, as strict as any Oath can bind them. And therefore while they who were ordained, and so took this Oath, and afterwards turned Traytors and Rebels,

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what, I ſay, they will anſwer for themſelves, I dread to think of: But let them look to that. As for you, who are to take this Oath now, I adviſe you to remember it as long as ye live; and be as faithful in the keeping, as I hope ye are ſincere in the taking of it.

The Oath being thus Adminiſtred to every one that is to be Ordain'd, the Biſhop Propounds ſeveral Queſtions to them; to which, every one is bound to Anſwer for himſelf, according to what is preſcrib'd; and all this is done publickly, in the Preſence of the People, that they alſo may be Witneſſes of it.

The firſt Queſtion is,

Do you truſt that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt, to take upon you this Office and Miniſtration, to ſerve God, for the promoting of his Glory, and the Edifying of his People?

A great Queſtion indeed, and that which no Man can give a true and poſitive Anſwer to, without having ſearched very narrowly into his own Heart, and ſeriouſly conſidered the bent and inclinations of his Soul. But it is a Queſtion very neceſſary to be Propounded: For, the Holy Ghoſt now ſupplies the Place and Room of our Bleſſed Saviour, in his Church Militant here on Earth. And therefore, as it was by him, that the ſeveral Offices themſelves were at

firſt

first Conſtituted, ſo it is by him, that Men are call'd to the Execution of them; and it is by him alone, that all Eccleſiaſtical Miniſtrations, perform'd by ſuch Officers, are made effectual to the Purpoſes for which they are appointed. And therefore the Church is bound to take Care, that none be admitted into her Miniſtry, but ſuch as ſhe believes and hopes to be call'd to it by the Holy Ghoſt. But ſhe can have no Ground to believe this, but only from the Teſtimony of the Perſons themſelves, none but themſelves being acquainted with the Motions of God's Spirit upon their own Hearts. And therefore the Biſhop requires them to deal plainly and faithfully with him and the Church, and to tell him, whether they really truſt, that they are moved by the Holy Ghoſt to take this Office upon them? To which every one is bound to Anſwer, *I truſt ſo*; not that he knows it, or is certain of it, for it is poſſible that his Heart may deceive him it, but that he truſts or hopes it is ſo.

But what ground can any one have to truſt, that he is moved by the Holy Ghoſt to take the Miniſtry upon him? To that, I anſwer, in ſhort, that if a Man finds, that upon due Examination, the Biſhop of the Dioceſe where he is to ſerve, is ſatisfied of his Abilities and Qualifications for the Miniſtry,

niſtry; and that his great End and Deſign in undertaking it, is to ſerve God, for the promoting of his Glory, and the Edifying of his People; he hath good Grounds to truſt, that he is moved to it by the Holy Ghoſt, it being only by him, that any Man can he duly Qualified for it, and moved to take it upon him, out of ſo good and pious a Deſign as that is. But if either of theſe things be wanting; as if a Man be not fitted for the Office, he may conclude, he is not call'd to it by the Holy Ghoſt, for he neither calls, nor uſeth any but fit Inſtruments in what he doth; or if a Man be moved to it, out of a Deſign, not to do good, but to get Applauſe or Preferment in the World, he may thence infer, that he is not moved by the Spirit of God, but by the Spirit of Pride and Covetouſneſs to it; and then can have no ground to expect, that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould ever bleſs and aſſiſt him in the Execution of his Office. According to theſe Rules therefore, they, who are to be now Ordain'd, may diſcern, whether they can truly give the Anſwer requir'd to this great Queſtion that will be Propounded to them. As for their Qualifications for it, the Biſhop hath already approved of them; but as to their main End and Deſign, in undertaking the Miniſtry, that muſt be left

left to God and their own Conſciences, who alone know it, and ſo can beſt judge, whether they can truly ſay, that they truſt they are moved to it by the Holy Ghoſt.

The next Queſtion Propounded is,

Do you think that you are truly call'd according to the Will of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the due Order of this Realm, to the Miniſtry of the Church?

Which Queſtion ſeems to be Propounded, that the Church may know, whether they be fully ſatisfied in their own Minds of the Legality of the Orders that they are to receive in our Church, and ſo to prevent both *Papiſts* and *Schiſmaticks* from receiving of them. For none that are really ſuch, can truly ſay, as every one who is Ordain'd, is bound to anſwer; *I think ſo.*

In the next place, the Biſhop aſketh them, whether they unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*? For unleſs they do ſo, they are not fit to be Miniſters of the Word and Sacraments contain'd and preſcrib'd in them. And therefore every one anſwers, *I do believe them.*

Hitherto, the Queſtions have been only concerning their preſent Opinion and Faith. But they which follow, concern their future Behaviour, and Diligence, and Faithfulneſs in diſcharging the Office committed

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to them; and therefore their Anſwers are all ſo many ſolemn Promiſes made to God and his Church, to act accordingly. Obliging themſelves in the Preſence of God, that they will diligently Read the Holy Scriptures, and gladly execute the whole Office of a Deacon, there declared to them; that they will apply all their Diligence to frame and faſhion their own Lives, and the Lives of their Families, according to the Doctrine of Chriſt, and reverently obey their Ordinary. For being asked by the Biſhop, whether they will do theſe things or no, every one anſwers, *I will*, or *I will do ſo by the Help of God*; or *I will endeavour my ſelf, the Lord being my Helper*. Which Promiſes being ſo ſolemnly made before God and his Church, are certainly as binding, as if they were made upon Oath, and ought to be as Religiouſly obſerv'd. Inſomuch, that as all Chriſtians, as ſuch, ſhould always remember, and keep the Vows and Promiſes they made, when they were Baptized; ſo all Miniſters, as ſuch, ſhould always remember, and keep thoſe Vows and Promiſes which they made when they were Ordained. For which Purpoſes, it is very convenient, if not neceſſary, for us often to read over the Office of Ordination, or at leaſt that part of it which contains the Anſwers and

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Promiſes which we made to God and his Church, when we were receiv'd into the Miniſtry of the Goſpel.

Now, every one having thus obliged himſelf, faithfully to diſcharge the Office that ſhall be Conferred upon him, and to Behave himſelf according to the Precepts of the Goſpel, through the whole Courſe of his Life: The Biſhop then lays his Hands ſeverally, upon the Head of every one that is to be Ordain'd Deacon; and ſaith, *Take thou Authority to Execute the Office of a Deacon in the Church of God committed unto thee, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.* He lays his Hands upon them, as the Apoſtles did upon thoſe whom they Ordain'd Deacons, *Acts 6. 6.* And ſo he gives them Authority to Execute the Office of a Deacon, not in his own Name, but in the Name of the moſt Bleſſed *Trinity*, whoſe Miniſters they are now made. And therefore the Biſhop delivers to every one of them the *New Teſtament*, ſaying, *Take thou Authority to Read the Goſpel in the Church of God, and to Preach the ſame, if thou be thereto Licenſed by the Biſhop himſelf.*

By which means, they who are thus Ordain'd are now enabled to Read the Goſpel with Authority, as the Miniſters of Chriſt, whoſe Goſpel it is. But they are not to

Preach,

Preach, except they are Licenſed to do it by the Biſhop himſelf. For the Supream Care of all the Souls in his Dioceſe, being committed unto him; it is not fitting that any ſhould undertake to Expound the Myſteries of the Goſpel there, without his Leave and Approbation.

All that are Ordain'd Deacons, having now Authority to Read the Goſpel, the Biſhop accordingly appoints one of them to Read the Goſpel on the Occaſion, as a Sign and Earneſt of that Authority which is now committed to them. And then if there be no Prieſts to be Ordain'd, he proceeds in the Communion.

But if there be any to be Ordain'd Prieſts at the ſame time, they being before Preſented to the Biſhop, to be admitted to the Order of Prieſthood, after the ſame manner as the Deacons were, and with the ſame Cautions, both to him that Preſents them, and to the People that are preſent; the Biſhop Adminiſters to them alſo the Oath of Supremacy, before ſpoken of, and then Reads to them a very Grave and Pious Diſcourſe, of the great Dignity and Importance of the Office whereunto they are call'd; exhorting them, in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to be Studious, Diligent and Faithful in the Execution of it. And that the Congrega-

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tion of Christ there Assembled, may also understand their Minds and Wills in those things, and that their Promise may the more move them to do their Duty, he demands them to Answer plainly to such Questions which he, in the Name of God and his Church, shall propound to them.

Where we may observe, that the first Question put to those, who were Ordain'd Priests, concerning their being mov'd by the Holy Ghost, to take that Office upon them, is now omitted; for these having been Ordain'd Deacons before, it is supposed, that they were then mov'd by the Spirit of Christ to take the Ministry of his Gospel upon them, and there is no need of any further Call from him. For being once call'd by him, though it was but to the lowest Office of his own Institution, the Church takes it for granted, that it is his Pleasure they should be promoted to any higher Office, if there be sufficient Reason and Occasion for it.

But the first Question here, is the same with the second in the Ordination of Deacons, concerning the Legality of our Orders; and the next is, whether they be perswaded, that the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to Salvation, and are determin'd to Instruct the People out of the said Scriptures, and to Teach

nothing as requir'd of Neceſſity to Salvation, but what they ſhall be perſwaded, may be concluded and prov'd by the ſame. To which every one Anſwers, *I am ſo perſwaded, and have ſo Determin'd by God's Grace.* Which ſhews how Neceſſary it is, that they who come to be Ordain'd ſhould conſider theſe things before-hand; for otherwiſe, how can they ſay, they have ſo determin'd already?

The other Queſtions and Anſwers are ſo fram'd, that they, who are to by Ordain'd Prieſts, do thereby Promiſe, and Oblige themſelves, in the Name, and by the Help of God, that they will give faithful Diligence, always to Miniſter the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Diſcipline of Chriſt, as the Lord hath Commanded: And as this Church and Realm hath received the ſame; that they will be ready with all Diligence, to baniſh and drive away all erroneous and ſtrange Doctrines, contrary to God's Word: That they will be diligent in Prayers, and in Reading the Holy Scriptures, and in ſuch Studies that will help to the Knowledge of the ſame. That they will be diligent to frame and faſhion themſelves, and their Families, according to the Doctrine of Chriſt: That they will maintain and ſet forward, as much as lieth in them, Quietneſs, Peace, and

and Love, amongſt all Chriſtian People; and that they will reverently Obey their Ordinary and other chief Miniſters, unto whom is committed the Charge and Government over them. For being ask'd, whether they will do theſe things or no; every one anſwers for himſelf, *I will do ſo, by the Help of God*, or *the Lord being my Helper*. Which ſhews the extraordinary care our Church takes, that all her Clergy may not only be Orthodox, and Virtuous, and good Men, but faithful alſo in the Diſcharge of their Duty; in that, ſhe admits none to Holy Orders, without laying upon them the higheſt Obligations imaginable, to be ſo. And they who, after all this, prove otherwiſe, will certainly have a very diſmal account to give, when our Lord ſhall hold his general Viſitation at the laſt Day.

After this, the Biſhop having Pray'd, that God, who had given them a Will to do all theſe things, would give them alſo Strength and Power to perfom the ſame: He then deſires the Congregation, ſecretly in their Prayers, to make their humble Supplication to God for all thoſe things. For which ſecret Prayers, Silence is order'd to be kept for a Space.

There is ſomething like to this in the *Greek Church*, where the Biſhop, at the Or-

daining of a Prieſt, Prays once μυςικῶς, ſecretly by himſelf. But here, every one in the Congregation is deſired to do it, that upon ſo ſolemn an Occaſion as this, all ſorts of Prayer may be uſed, even Secret, as well as Publick, and that every one by himſelf, as well as altogether, may lift up their Hearts to God, and humbly ſupplicate his Divine Majeſty for all theſe things; that is, that he would give thoſe, who are now to be Ordain'd, Grace to do all theſe things which they have now Promiſed.

Wherefore, when ye hear the Biſhop deſire you to Pray ſecretly, as ye would ſhew your Dutifulneſs and Obedience, not only to him, but to Chriſt too, in whoſe Name he ſpeaks; Ye muſt fall down immediately upon your Knees, and in the moſt Humble and Earneſt manner that ye can; beſeech Almighty God, the Fountain of all Wiſdom, Grace, and Goodneſs, that he would be pleaſed, for Chriſt Jeſus ſake, to aſſiſt thoſe, who are now to be Ordain'd, with ſuch Influences of his Holy Spirit, whereby they may be enabled always to Perform what they have now Promis'd; and ſo both ſave themſelves and thoſe that hear them. If ye do this Heartily and Sincerely, as ye ought, it will doubtleſs be of very great advantage, not only to them, but to your ſelves too. For your Prayers

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will one time or other, return into your own Bosom, and procure as great a Blessing for you, as you desire for them.

Now, the whole Congregation having spent some time on their Knees in Secret Prayer to God for his Holy Spirit, they all rise up again, and humbly confiding, that God, according to his Promise, hath heard their Prayers; they join their Forces as it were together, and with one Heart and Voice, call for the said Blessed Spirit to come down upon them, saying, or singing that Apostolical Hymn,

Come Holy Ghost, our Souls inspire,
And lighten with Celestial Fire, &c.

Which done, the Bishop, with all there present, Prays again, and Praises and Worships the most high God, for these his Inestimable Benefits to Mankind, in sending his Son to be our Saviour; in appointing several Offices in the Church, to Administer the Means of Salvation to us, and in calling the Persons now present to the same.

And when this Prayer is ended, the Bishop, with the Priests present, lay their Hands severally upon the Head of every one that receiveth the Order of Priesthood, the Receivers humbly kneeling upon their Knees, and the Bishop saying,

Receive the Holy Ghoſt, for the Office and Work of a Prieſt in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Impoſition of our Hands; whoſe Sins thou doſt Forgive, they are Forgiven; and whoſe Sins thou doſt retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful Diſpenſer of the Word of God, and of his Holy Sacraments, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. Amen.

Where there are ſeveral things worthy to be obſerved.

As firſt, that altho' the whole Power of Ordination be in the Biſhop alone, and the Impoſition of his Hands for that Purpoſe is ſufficient to the making of a Prieſt, yet the Church hath thought good to Order, that the Prieſts which are preſent, ſhall lay on their Hands too, in Conformity, I ſuppoſe, to the Ancient Cuſtom that hath obtain'd in the *Latin* Church. I ſay the *Latin*, becauſe it was never heard of in the *Greek*, or any of the *Eaſtern* Churches, that any but Biſhops ſhould lay Hands upon Perſons to be Ordain'd. But in the *Latin*, there is an Ancient Canon for it, or Decree of a Council, held at *Carthage*, Anno Dom. 398. which ſaith, *Presbyter cum ordinatur, Epiſcopo eum benedicente, & manum ſuper Caput ejus tenente, etiam omnes Presbyteri qui preſentes ſunt, manus*

manus ſuas juxta, manus Epiſcopi ſuper caput illius teneant; when a Prieſt is Ordain'd, the Biſhop Bleſſing him, and laying the Hand upon his Head, let all the Prieſts alſo that are preſent, hold their Hands upon his Head, by the Hands of the Biſhop. And from hence, I ſuppoſe it was, that our *Rubrick* was taken; in that it agrees ſo exactly with it in every particular. And the Reaſon of it ſeems to be the ſame with that of the fourth Canon of the Council of *Nice*; that three Biſhops ſhall be always preſent at the Ordination of a Biſhop. Not but that the Ordination is valid, and was always reputed ſo, altho' perform'd only by one Biſhop, but to prevent clandeſtine Ordinations, to make the Work more publick and ſolemn, and to ſignalize it by the concurrent Teſtimony and Conſent of ſeveral Perſons joining together in it.

For in the next place we muſt obſerve, that altho' the Prieſts, if any be preſent, lay on their Hands alſo, yet it is expreſly Order'd, that the Biſhop ſhall ſay the words, *Receive the Holy Ghoſt*, &c. For if a meer Prieſt ſhould ſay them, or any one but a Biſhop, the Ordination was always reckon'd null and void. For this was a judged Caſe in the ſecond Council of *Sevil*, *Anno Dom.* 619. which, under-

ſtanding that a Biſhop at the Ordination of one Prieſt and two Deacons, laid his Hands upon them; but being troubled with Sore Eyes, ſo that he could not Read, a Prieſt Bleſſed them, or read the Words of Conſecration; they judged the whole Action to be void, and that the Perſons who ſhould have been Ordain'd, did not receive *conſecrationis titulum, ſed ignominiæ potius elogia*; not the Title of Conſecration, but rather a Monument of Ignominy; and therefore were not to be reputed among the Clergy. So careful was the Church in thoſe Days, that every thing eſſential to Ordination, ſhould be perform'd by the Biſhop himſelf. And ſo is our Church at this time, and therefore requires that the Biſhop ſay the Words.

And then concerning the Words themſelves, I obſerv'd the laſt time, the Reaſon why they are the ſame wherewith our Lord Ordain'd his Apoſtles, only there are ſome others inſerted to determine, and others added to Explain the Office that is now Conferred. And therefore I ſhall obſerve no more about them now, but that the Biſhop pronounceth them, and ſo Confers the Order, not in his own Name, but *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*, whoſe Vicegerent he is, in Ordaining Perſons to Miniſter to his

his Divine Majesty in this Sacred Office of Priesthood.

The Priests being now Ordain'd, the Bishop delivers to every one of them kneeling, the *Bible* in his Hand, not only the *New Testament*, as it was in the Ordination of Deacons, but both *Old* and *New*, or the whole *Bible*, and when he delivers it, he saith,

Take thou Authority to Preach the Word of God, and to Minister the Holy Sacraments, in the Congregation where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto.

So that now they have Authority, not only to Read the Gospel, but to Preach the whole Word of God, and to Minister his Holy Sacraments, with Power and Efficacy, the Holy Spirit which they have now receiv'd, being always ready at the Execution of the several parts of their Office, to make them effectual to the great Ends and Purposes for which they are appointed. But altho' they are by this means made Priests of the *Catholick Church*, and so may effectually Administer the Word and Saments in any part of the World; yet nevertheless, they are not to do it any where, but in the Congregation where they shall be lawfully Appointed, *i. e.* by the Bishop of the Place, who alone can lawfully do it.

When

When this is done, the *Nicene Creed* is ſung, or ſaid, and then the Biſhop goes on in the Service of the Communion: Which all they that have receiv'd Orders, are requir'd to take together, and to remain in the ſame place where Hands were laid upon them, until ſuch time as they have receiv'd the Communion, that ſo they may be ſtill more ſtrictly oblig'd, upon the very Sacrament it ſelf, faithfully to perform what they have now Promiſed, and may receive further ſupplies of Grace and aſſiſtance from our Bleſſed Saviour to do it, by partaking of his moſt precious Body and Blood.

Thus I have laid before you, the Method and Deſign of the Offices which our Church hath Appointed for the Ordination of Prieſts and Deacons; that ſoye may underſtand the Excellency of them, and be the better prepaed, not to be Idle Spectators, much leſs Diſturbers of ſo great a Work; but Devoutly, and Heartily to join in the Prayers that are made for thoſe who are Ordain'd. Now from all that hath been ſaid upon this Subject; I ſhall ſpeak a few, and but a few words, 1. To thoſe who come to receive Holy Orders, and then to all thoſe who are preſent at it.

As for you, who are come hither, to

take

take upon you the Office, either of Deacon, or Prieſt, in the Church of Chriſt; ye have heard, and I hope conſider'd before now, the Greatneſs of the Office ye undertake, and the Promiſe ye muſt make before ye are admitted into it. Let me now beſeech you in the Name of the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, whoſe Servant ye are now to be, that from this Day forward, ye look upon him as your great Maſter; and lay out your ſelves wholly in the Service he calls you to. And whatſoever Difficulties ye meet with in it, follow the Apoſtles Example, *faint not*, nor be diſcouraged, but go on with Cheerfulneſs and Alacrity, as remembring ye ſerve the beſt Maſter in the World; one, who will not only ſtand by, and aſſiſt you, but reward you at laſt with a Crown of Righteouſneſs.

As for the reſt, I ſhall only ſay, that from what ye have heard, ye may eaſily ſee what cauſe ye have to thank God, that they who adminiſter the Means of Grace and Salvation to you, are ſo Regularly, ſo Solemnly, ſo Apoſtolically Ordained. And how great an Eſteem and Reverence ye ought to have for all, who are thus Ordained, though not for their own ſakes, yet for his ſake whoſe Miniſters they are, and whoſe Work they do, even our dear

and

and ever Bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

SERMON

SERMON IV.

Acts ii. 47.

And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.

THE Eternal Son of God having taken our Nature upon him, and in it, by his *One Oblation of himself once offered*, made a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, *He is now able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.* But forasmuch as *He took not on him the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of Abraham; the Angels, which kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation, are all still reserved in everlasting Chains, under darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day.* And as for those who partake of that Nature, which he assumed, and in which he suffered, and

Heb. 7. 25.

c. 2. v. 16.

Jud. 6.

and ſo are capable of Pardon and Salvation by him, it is much to be feared, that a great, if not the greateſt part of them, alſo will, notwithſtanding what he hath done and ſuffered for them, periſh everlaſtingly. Not by reaſon of any Defect or Inſufficiency in his Merits and Power to ſave them, but by reaſon of their own Obſtinacy or Negligence, in not performing thoſe eaſy Conditions which he requires of them, in order to their being actually veſted in that Salvation which he hath purchaſed for them. But whoſoever, among the Sons of Men, will come up to his moſt gracious Terms, and ſubmit themſelves wholly to be governed and ſaved by him, he will take Care that they ſhall be certainly ſaved, and advanced to eternal Glory in Heaven. And for that Purpoſe he always ſo orders it in his Providence, that all ſuch are firſt admitted into, and made Members of that Church, which he hath eſtabliſh'd upon Earth, as the Holy Ghoſt here witneſſeth, ſaying, *And the Lord added to the Church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.*

For the better underſtanding of which Words, we ſhall briefly conſider.

Firſt, What is here meant by the Church?

Secondly, Who, by ſuch as ſhould be ſaved?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, What by the Lord's adding to the Church, daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved?

As for the *Firſt*, we muſt remember, that when our Lord was upon Earth, ſaid he would build himſelf a Church, and that upon ſuch a Rock, *that the Gates of Hell ſhould not prevail againſt it*. In Order whereunto, he firſt choſe twelve Perſons, called his Apoſtles, to whom he revealed the Deſign he came into the World about, and the great Myſteries of the Goſpel; and then ſent them out to acquaint others with what he had taught them, and to work Miracles for the Confirmation of it: And to admit all ſuch as would receive it into their Society, by baptizing of them. By which means he ſoon had a conſiderable number of Diſciples; out of which he ſelected ſeventy others, to whom he gave Power alſo *to preach the Goſpel*, and *to work Miracles*. And having thus laid the Foundation, he ſoon after purchaſed to himſelf an Univerſal Church, with his own moſt precious Blood. And, riſing again the third day, he preſently took care to ſettle the perpetual Government of it, by granting to his Apoſtles the like Power and Commiſſion which he had received from his Father for that purpoſe. And then he gave them Or-

Matt. 16. 18.

Joh. 4. 12.

Luke 10. 1.

ders

Matt. 28. 19, 20. ders *to go and preach the Gospel to all Nations*, to make them his Disciples by *baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, and to teach them all things that he had commanded them; assuring them withal, that he himself, by his Holy Spirit, *would be with them*, and their Successors, *to the end of the World*.

Our Lord having thus done all things which were necessary for the Establishment of his Church upon Earth, he ascended up into Heaven, there also to take the supreme Care of it. And ten Days after, upon the Day of *Pentecost*, he, according to his Promise, sent down the Holy Ghost in a miraculous Manner upon his Apostles, to assist them in speaking the Languages of all Nations, in order to their Conversion, and to set home what they preached upon the Hearts of those who heard it: Which wrought so effectually with them, that by one short Sermon preached the same Day

Acts 2. 41. by St. *Peter*, *About three Thousand Souls received the Word gladly, and were baptized. And from that Day forward, many others did so.*

Who therefore in my Text, are said to be added to the Church, that is, to the Society, or Congregation of the faithful People before described; consisting of the Apostles, as the Governours of it, and of such as were joined to them, and held Communion

munion with them in the Word and Sacraments, which our Lord had Inſtituted.

And when the ſaid Society was diſpers'd, as it ſoon was, over the whole World, it was ſtill the ſame, and retain'd the ſame Name, being ſtill called the Church. And not only the whole, but whereſoever any part of it was ſettled in any City, and the Territories belonging to it; that alſo was called the Church of that City, as the Church of *Hieruſalem*, the Church of *Corinth*, &c. And whereſoever there were ſeveral ſuch Cities and Churches in them belonging to any Province or Country, they are called the Churches of that Country, as the Churches of *Aſia*, *Macedonia*, &c. But as every private Chriſtian is a Member of ſome particular Church, ſo is every particular Church a Member of the *Catholick* or *Univerſal*, which is always meant, when we read in Scripture of the Church in general, without the Addition of Place or Country. As where it is ſaid, *That Chriſt alſo loved the Church, and Chriſt is the Head of the Church.* So here, *And the Lord added to the Church daily* Eph. 5: 25. ver. 23.

Such as ſhould be Saved, or ſuch as are Saved, as the word may be render'd: But the Senſe is much the ſame. For our Salvation plainly begins in this Life, although it be perfected only in the other. It commenceth Σωζομένους.

menceth from our Repentance and Conversion; from our being saved from our
Acts 2. ver. 40. Sins, or *from this untoward Generation*, as the Apostle in this Chapter words it. And they, and only they, who are thus saved from their Sins upon Earth, can ever attain to the Salvation of their Souls in Heaven. By such therefore as are, or should be Saved, we are to understand such as being prick'd in their Hearts, and convinc'd of their former Errors in Opinion and Practice, do heartily Repent of them, and gladly receive the Word, and embrace the terms propounded in the Gospel, for the Pardon of their Sins, and for the Assistance of God's Grace and Spirit, that they may so serve him here, as to enjoy him for ever. Such as these, which shall certainly be Saved, *the Lord daily added to the Church.*

What we are to understand by that Phrase, even the Lord's adding them to the Church, may be easily and clearly gathered from the Context. For these doubtless were added to the Church after the same manner as the 3000 were upon the day
Act. 2. 41. *Pentecost.* Now of those, it is here said, that *they were Baptized*: Which was the way that our Lord had Instituted for the Admission of any into his Church. And then it follows in the next Verse, that *they*
ver. 42. *continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine,*

and

and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers; that is, They conſtantly profeſſed to believe the Doctrine delivered by the Apoſtles; they held conſtant Communion or Fellowſhip with them, as became Members of that Society, whereof the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors were deputed Governours by Chriſt himſelf; they frequented the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, and the publick Prayers of the Church. By which means, they were ſo added to the Church, as to continue in it, and neglect no Duty which was enjoin'd, or perform'd by it. And thus, queſtionleſs it was, that *the Lord* afterwards, alſo *added to the Church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.*

A thing much to be obſerv'd; eſpecially, when the Church of Chriſt is ſo ſlighted and undervalued, as it is in our days. For it is plain, from theſe words, that our Lord did not only thus *add to his Church daily ſuch as ſhould be Saved*; but he hath left it upon Record, that all Generations might know that he did ſo, and by conſequence, that all which ſhall be Saved, muſt be added to the Church as they were. Foraſmuch as this being the Way and Method that he hath ſettled in the World for the ſaving of Souls, or for the applying that Salvation to them, which he hath Purchaſed for them: We

have no ground to expect that he ſhould ever recede from it; eſpecially, conſidering how ſtrictly he himſelf hath obſerv'd it, even to a Miracle; as might eaſily be ſhewn from ſeveral Inſtances in the Holy Scripture. I ſhall mention only three, which are very remarkable;

The firſt ſhall be that of *Cornelius* the *Centurion*, whoſe Prayers and Alms being gone up for a Memorial before God; God was pleaſed to ſend down an Angel to him. What to do? To reveal the Myſteries of the Goſpel to him? To tell him what he muſt believe and do, that he might be Saved? No, his Commiſſion was only to direct *Cornelius*, to ſend for *Peter* the Apoſtle of Chriſt, who ſhould tell him what he ought to do. And at the ſame time that he ſent for him, *Peter* had a Viſion from Heaven, whereby he was fully aſſur'd, that he ought to receive the ſaid *Cornelius* into the Church; and therefore he accordingly did ſo. From whence we may obſerve, what care our Lord took, what ſupernatural Means he us'd, to bring *Cornelius* into his Church, in order to his ſaving of him.

Act. 10. 6.

The next Inſtance ſhall be that of the Eunuch, Treaſurer to *Candace* Queen of the *Æthiopians*, who having been at *Hieruſalem* to worſhip God; *The Angel of the Lord*

Act. 8 26.

ſpake

ſpake to *Philip* to go to ſuch a Place: when he came there, he ſaw the Eunuch ſitting in a Chariot; and the Spirit bad him go near to that Chariot; which when he had done, he heard the Enuch read the Prophet *Iſaiah*. From whence *Philip* took Occaſion to expound the whole Goſpel to him: Inſomuch, that before they parted, he was baptized, and ſo added to the Church. At the ſame time that the Lord ſent his Angel to order *Philip* to go and meet the Eunuch, he could have ſent him directly to the Eunuch himſelf. And when the Spirit ſpake to *Philip* to join himſelf to the Chariot where the Eunuch was, he could, if he had pleaſed, have ſpoken to the Eunuch himſelf, and have cauſed him to underſtand the Scriptures without the Aſſiſtance of any Man. But it ſeems, that our Lord having now eſtabliſhed his Church upon Earth, as he would not ſend his Angel to do it, ſo neither would the Spirit himſelf undertake to direct the Eunuch how he might be ſaved without the Church; but only to bring him into the Church, that ſo he might be ſaved.

Acts 8. 26.

v. 38.

But that which is moſt of all to be obſerved in this Caſe, is, the Converſion of St. *Paul*; to whom, our Lord himſelf was pleaſed to appear in a miraculous Manner, and to converſe familiarly with him. And

yet he himſelf would not make known any part of the Goſpel to him; no, not ſo much as that he was the Chriſt, but only that he was Jeſus whom he perſecuted. Yea, although *Saul* asked him particularly, what he would have him to do; yet our Lord would not tell him himſelf, but ſends him to the Church to know it; *Ariſe*, ſaith he, *go into the City, and it ſhall be told thee what thou muſt do.* And then he appear'd miraculouſly to *Ananias*, one of his Diſciples in that City, and ordered him to go to *Saul*, and acquaint him with what he muſt do. By which Means he being fully inſtructed in the Goſpel, was baptized, and ſo brought into the Church. From all which it is plain and evident, that our Lord is ſo reſolved to add thoſe who ſhall be ſaved to his Church, that he would rather work Miracles to bring Men into it, than ſave any without it.

Acts 9. 6.

Seeing therefore, that the Holy Ghoſt hath ſo poſitively affirmed, that the Lord added to the Church ſuch as ſhould be ſaved; and likewiſe hath given us ſuch extraordinary Inſtances of it, it is no wonder that the Fathers ſo frequently aſſert, that there is no Salvation to be had out of Chriſt's holy Catholick Church; but that whoſoever would be a Member of the Church Triumphant in Heaven, muſt firſt be

Cyprian ep. 62. ad Pompon. ep. 73. ad Jubajan. Ambroſ. *in* Pſal. 40. Auguſtin. ep ad Dona'. poſt Coll. De Symb. ad Catech. lib 4. c. 10.

be a Member of the Church here Militant on Earth.

Now that which I principally design, in discoursing upon this Subject, is, to enquire into the Reasons of it. Not that I think it necessary or possible for us fully to understand that infinite Reason which our Lord hath for all his Actions, and in a particular manner for this. It is sufficient for us that we know, that he is both able and willing to save us, and that this is the way wherein he is pleased to do it. And therefore we, who can never be saved any other way but by him, are obliged by our own Interest to submit to it, whether we apprehend any Reason for it or no. Howsoever, seeing it is a Matter wherein the Glory of his Name, the Honour of his Church, and the Welfare of our own Souls is so highly concerned, by his Leave and Assistance, which I humbly beg his Divine Majesty to vouchsafe unto me, I shall present you with some such Considerations, from whence ye may conclude it to be, both Reasonable and Necessary, that they who *shall be saved*, should be *added to the Church*.

For *First*, it is acknowledged by all Christians, that in order to our being saved by Christ, it is necessary that we know and believe his Gospel, and the Fundamen-

tal Truths revealed in it. And therefore as God would have all Men to be ſaved, ſo for that Purpoſe, he would have them
1 Tim. 2. 4. come to the *Knowledge of the Truth*. But it is as plain alſo, that, as things now ſtand, we cannnot come to the Knowledge of the Truth, but only by the Church, which is the Witneſs and Keeper of Holy
1 Tim. 3. 15. Writ, and ſo, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*; by which the Truth is upheld, and maintained in the World, the Goſpel preſerved and propagated, and ſo true Religion and the way of Salvation by Chriſt, is divulged and made known to Mankind. Inſomuch, that although I do not doubt, but that whilſt the Church was confined to one Family, God, the Creator and Preſerver of all Mankind, did manifeſt himſelf in an extraordinary Manner, to ſome that were not of that Church. Yet now that the Partition-Wall is broken down, and the Church diſperſed over the whole World; now, I ſay, we have no ground to expect any ſuch extraordinary Revelations; but they that would know the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, muſt go to the Church for it; where they may read the Scriptures, and have them truly interpreted to them, and ſo fully underſtand what God would have

them

them to believe, concerning himself and his Son. For what greater Revelations can be expected, than either by an Angel, or by the Spirit, or else by our Blessed Saviour? Yet, in the Instances before-mentioned, we see that the Angel would not instruct *Cornelius*, the Spirit would not instruct the Eunuch, our Lord himself would not instruct *Saul*, in the Articles of the Christian Faith; but they all sent them, every one his Man, to the Church, to be instructed by her. Wherefore seeing we cannot be saved without the Knowledge of the Gospel, nor know the Gospel, but by the Church; it is no wonder that *The Lord addeth to the Church daily such as shall be saved.*

Moreover, as we cannot come to the Knowledge of God's Word, but by his Church, so neither can we rightly believe what is there revealed, nor duly perform what is there commanded, without the Assistance of God's Holy Spirit, which is given by the Ministry of the Church, and shall abide with it for ever, as our Lord hath promised. For the Promise being made only to Christ's Disciples, and so to his Church, none but such as are of that Society can receive any Benefit by it. And therefore when they who heard St. *Peter*'s Sermon, were solicitous to know what to

John 14. 26.

do

Acts 2. 38. do; the Apoſtle ſaid to them, *Repent and be baptized, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sins, and you ſhall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*; plainly implying, that they muſt firſt be baptized, and ſo received into the Church, before the Holy Ghoſt would come upon them. There are many ſuch Paſſages in the New Teſtament, which clearly ſhew, that they only which are of the Church, can partake of the Spirit which is in it; that they only who are Members of that Body, whereof Chriſt is Head; and can be influenced and aſſiſted by that bleſſed Spirit which flows from him. And this certainly is one great Reaſon why *the Lord addeth to the Church daily ſuch as ſhall be ſaved.*

But that which I intend, by the Bleſſing of God, to inſiſt chiefly upon, is taken from the Method and Means of Salvation, which are uſed in the Church, and no where elſe, as they ought to be. I know it is by Chriſt only that we can attain to Salvation, and that it is by the Spirit only that we can be fitted and qualified for it. But howſoever we muſt not, we cannot expect that he ſhould act upon us immediately from himſelf, without the uſe of thoſe Means which he himſelf hath preſcribed for that End: for he would never have preſcribed them, but that he deſigned to

act

act by them. I know also that the Efficacy of the Word and Sacraments, and all the Means of Grace which he hath ordained, is not to be ascribed to themselves, but only to his Spirit moving in them, and working together with them. But howsoever, in that he makes use of those Means in his working upon us, it is necessary that we also make use of them, if we desire to be wrought upon by him: and by consequence, that we be added to and continue in the Church, if we would be saved; forasmuch as it is there only that we can enjoy those Means, which our Saviour hath appointed in order thereunto.

To prove this we need only consider the Means which Christ's *Holy Catholick Church* hath prescribed out of his Word, and the excellent Course she takes to train up her Children for Heaven, and fit them to converse with the Holy Angels, and with Christ himself in the other World. For he that duly considers this, will soon acknowledge, that the like is no where else to be found, but only in the Church.

But how shall we know what the Catholick Church hath always done in this Case? Must we read over the Councils, consult the Fathers, and search the Records of the Church in all Ages? No. We need not give our selves that Trouble: For,

whatsoever Means of Grace and Salvation have been used by the Catholick Church in all Ages; the same, and none else, are to this Day used by our own. Insomuch that if we do but cast our Eye upon the Church we live in, we may in that, as in a Mirrour, behold the constant Practice of the Uuniversal Church, in all things necessary to Men's Salvation.

This therefore is that which I shall now do, even briefly survey the Constitution of our Church, and consider the excellent Method observ'd in it for the bringing of Souls to Heaven. In order whereunto, I must first premise one thing in general; which is, that the Bishops and Pastors of our Church having, by a successive Imposition of Hands, continued all along from the Apostles, received the same Spirit which was breathed into them; and so regularly succeeding the Apostles, and supplying now their Places in this Part of the World, hence they cannot but have the same Power and Authority which the Apostles had, to confer, by the laying on of their Hands, as they did, both the Spirit which they themselves received, and so their whole Office upon other Bishops; and likewise so much of it as is necessary for the right Administration of the Word and Sacraments to other inferiour Officers in

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the Church, which we call Priests and Deacons: Of which there are so many ordained every Year by the Imposition of their Hands, that our whole Church is sufficiently supplied with them. So that there is no Parish, or particular Congregation of Christians in the whole Kingdom, but hath or may have a Priest thus ordained, and so rightly qualified for the effectual Administration of the Word and Sacraments, and other Means of Grace and Salvation among them. The Spirit which they have received, being alwavs ready at the Execution of their several Offices, to bless and sanctifie what is done by them, to the Sanctification and Salvation of those who attend upon it, and prepare themselves for it, as they ought.

But, seeing the Means of Grace thus administred by them, become effectual to the Purposes for which they are used, only by this the Co-operation of Christ's Spirit with them; hence all that desire or expect any real Benefit from them, must look higher than the Means themselves, trusting upon God for his Blessing upon them, and for the Assistance of his Spirit in them, according to the Promises which he hath made to that Purpose; without which we have no ground to expect they should be performed to us.

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This being premiſed concerning the Means of Grace in general, we ſhall now conſider them particularly, in the ſame Method wherein the Catholick, or, which is all one, our Church appoints them to be uſed. By which we ſhall clearly ſee, what an excellent Courſe ſhe takes to bring up her Children in the true Faith and Fear of God, and ſo to make them Heirs to the the Crown of Glory. For which Purpoſe it is neceſſary that we begin at the firſt Admiſſion of them into her Communion by Baptiſm. Concerning which we may obſerve that the Errors and Iniquities of the Times and Place we live in are ſuch, that there are many Heathens amongſt us, Perſons of riper Years and yet not baptized: For whoſe ſakes therefore, our Church, to ſhew her Readineſs to receive them upon their Repentance and Converſion, hath appointed an Office for Baptizing of them. For which there was no Occaſion in this Nation for many Ages until now. But although there be many ſuch Perſons now among us abſolutely conſider'd, yet they are but very few in compariſon of thoſe who are baptized in their Infancy. And therefore I ſhall begin with thoſe, and concern my ſelf no further at preſent with the other.

A Child therefore being born of Chriſtian Parents, and by them offered to the Church to be received into her Society; the Church, in Obedience to Chriſt's Command, according to the Practice of the Univerſal Church, expreſſeth her Willingneſs to receive it. But withal, conſidering the Frailty and Mortality of the Parents, ſhe requireth ſome other Perſons, call'd Godfathers and Godmothers, to be ſpecially preſent at it, as Witneſſes, Proxies, and Sureties. As Witneſſes, to atteſt upon Occaſion, that this Child was baptized: As Proxies for the Child, by whom he may promiſe (or they in his Name) that he will perform the Conditions of the Covenant which he is now admitted into: And laſtly, as Sureties to the Church, that this Child ſhall be brought up in the Chriſtian Religion. So great Care doth our Church take, that all who are admitted into her Society may believe and live as becometh Chriſtians.

By theſe therefore, the Child being brought to the Church, it is there preſented to the Lord, (as Chriſt was in the Temple) whoſe Miniſter finding it there, and underſtanding that it hath not yet been Baptized, puts the People in mind of the neceſſity of Baptiſm, and exhorts them to pray, that this Child may have it admi-

niſtred effectually to him. Upon which, the whole Congregation there preſent, join with him in ſupplicating the moſt High God, that he would Waſh, and Sanctifie this Child, ſo that it may be Saved. Then the Miniſter reads to them part of the Goſpel concerning the Children that were brought to Chriſt; draws ſome plain and proper Inferences from it, and gives God thanks for the ſame. After that, he addreſſeth himſelf to the Sureties, and acquaints them, that as Chriſt hath Promiſed to hear their Prayers, for this Child which they have now brought to him; ſo the Child muſt for his part Promiſe, by them his Sureties, that he will Renounce the Devil and all his Works, conſtantly believe God's Holy Word, and Obediently keep his Commandments. Which being accordingly done, by Queſtions propounded by the Miniſter, in the Name of the Church, and Anſwer'd by the Sureties in the Name of the Child; the Miniſter prayeth, that the Child may have Grace to perform what he hath now promiſed. And then having ask'd by what Name they would have the Child call'd, he poureth Water upon it, and calling it by that Name, he ſaith, *I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*: Which being the very words wherewith

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our Lord commanded this Sacrament ſhould be Adminiſtred; the Child is now fully and perfectly Baptized. And to teſtifie her Acknowledgment that it is ſo, the Church immediately receiveth it into her Communion, and ſolemnly declareth it to be now a Chriſtian, not only by Words, but alſo by making a Croſs upon the Child's Fore-head; the common Sign whereby Chriſtians were always diſtinguiſhed from *Jews* and *Heathens*: the Miniſter ſaying, in the Name of the Church, *we receive this Child into the Congregation of Chriſt's Flock, and ſign it with the Sign of the Croſs*, &c. After which, the Miniſter ſtirs up the People there preſent, to give God thanks for this Favour, and to Pray unto him, that this Child may lead the reſt of his Life according to this beginning. Which done, he puts the Sureties in mind of their Duty, now incumbent upon them, to ſee that Child be taught, ſo ſoon as he ſhall be able to learn, what a ſolemn Vow, Promiſe, and Profeſſion he hath made by them, and all other things which a Chriſtian ought to know and believe to his Souls Health; and then to bring it to the Biſhop to be Confirm'd by him.

This is in ſhort, the Subſtance of that excellent Office which our Church hath appointed for the publick Baptiſm of Infants.

But in caſe of extream Neceſſity, leſt the Child ſhould die without it, ſhe admitteth of *Private Baptiſm*, and abſolutely requireth no more in the Adminiſtration of it, than what is eſſential to it, even that the Child be Baptized with Water, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*. But if it lives, ſhe requireth that it be afterwards brought to the Church, and that whatſoever was before omitted of the publick Office, be there performed to it.

Now, the Church having thus gotten a new Member added to her, and taken Security for its Education in the Faith of Chriſt; for the better performance of it, ſhe hath drawn up a ſhort *Catechiſm* for the Child to learn (when he is able) conſiſting of all things neceſſary for it to know, and nothing elſe. And that ſhe may be certified, whether the Child hath learnt it or no; and likewiſe contribute what ſhe can, towards his underſtanding all and every thing contained in the ſaid *Catechiſm*, ſhe commands that the Miniſter of the Pariſh where he lives, do frequently and openly in the Church, Examine and Inſtruct him in it.

By this means therefore, this new Chriſtian, now come to Years of Diſcretion, underſtanding what his Sureties promiſed

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in his Name, when he was Baptiz'd, is by them or ſome other, brought to the Biſhop to be Confirm'd by him. In order whereunto, he, in the Preſence of God, and of the Congregation there aſſembled, renews the ſolemn Promiſe and Vow which was then made in his Name, ratifying and confirming the ſame in his own Perſon, and acknowledging himſelf bound to believe and do all thoſe things which his Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for him. And that he may be enabled ſo to do; the Biſhop, with the whole Congregation there preſent, jointly Pray to God, to aſſiſt and ſtrengthen him with his Grace and Spirit. And then the Biſhop, after the Example of the Holy Apoſtles, lays his Hand upon the Child's Head, and Prays to God for him, ſaying, *Defend, O Lord, this thy Child, with thy Heavenly Grace*, &c. After which the whole Congregation join again with the Biſhop in ſome other Prayers to the ſame purpoſe. All which being duly perform'd as it ought, cannot certainly but be very effectual to the great Ends and Purpoſes for which it is uſed. As Chriſtians in all Ages have found by their own Experience.

Our Chriſtian being thus confirm'd, he is now look'd upon in the Eye of the Church, as no longer a Minor, but of full Age to

receive and enjoy all the Bleſſings and Privileges which his Heavenly Father in the Holy Goſpel hath ſettled upon him. And therefore his ſpiritual Guardians, the Godfathers and Godmothers being diſcharged, he is now to ſtand upon his own Legs. And well he may, having ſo indulgent, pious, and wiſe a Mother upon Earth, as the Church is, to take care of him. For, if he be but Dutiful and Obedient to her, and follow thoſe good Directions which ſhe gives him, there is no fear of falling. For ſhe conſiders what potent Enemies he is to Fight with, that the Fleſh, the World, and the Devil which he renounced, will all ſtrive to recover their Poſſeſſion of him; and therefore, ſhe out of God's Word, furniſheth him with ſuch ſpiritual Armour, that if he be not failing to himſelf in the uſe of it, he may not only withſtand, but conquer them all. She conſiders every Diſtemper he can be ſubject to; and finding ſuitable Remedies preſcribed for it in the Holy Scriptures, ſhe directs him how to apply them, ſo as to prevent, or cure it. In ſhort, ſhe conſiders the great Work he has to do, no leſs than to work out his Salvation with Fear and Trembling, that he can never do it, without the Aſſiſtance of God's Spirit, and that he hath no ground to expect any ſuch Aſſiſtance, but in the

uſe of thoſe Means which God hath appointed for that end; hence ſhe often calls upon him, to uſe thoſe Means, Inſtructs him how to do it aright, aſſiſts him in it, and ſo keeps him in continual Exerciſe and Employment, about the Work he hath to do, that he may be Saved.

For in the firſt place, conſidering, that in order to the preventing thoſe many Sins which are occaſioned by the prevailing Humours of the Body, and alſo to the preſerving his Mind in a fit temper, both to perform his Duties unto God, and to receive Divine Illuminations and Aſſiſtances from him; it is neceſſary to keep his Body always under. And conſidering likewiſe, that God himſelf hath for that very purpoſe commanded not only Temperance at all times, but at ſome times Abſtinence and Faſting: Hence the Church hath ſet apart, ſome certain Days every Year, whereon her Son, we now ſpeak of, ſhould by Faſting, bring his Body into a conſtant ſubjection to his Soul; leſt otherwiſe, if there were no ſet times appointed for it, he ſhould be, as moſt are, too apt to neglect it, and never Faſt at all, or at moſt, but very ſeldom, and ſo to no purpoſe.

Now, the Days which ſhe directs him to ſpend in Faſting, are the Forty Days of *Lent*, according to the Cuſtom of the *Ca-*

tholick Church, every Year before *Easter*; and the three *Rogation-days*, immediately preceeding *Holy-Thursday*. Besides which, she appoints three Days, *viz. Wednesday*, *Friday*, and *Saturday*, in each of the four *Ember Weeks*, whereon to Fast, not only for the purposes aforesaid, but likewise that he may the more effectually implore a Blessing, both upon the Bishops who are to Ordain, and upon those who shall be Ordained to any Holy Function the *Sunday* following; which if he neglect to do, he must blame himself, if any unworthy Persons be then admitted into the Sacred Ministry of the Church. Whereas, if he perform his Duty aright at that time, he may upon good grounds expect a greater Blessing from the Word and Sacraments administred by those, who are then ordain'd. Be sure his Prayers will, one time or other, return into his own Bosom; and therefore, I heartily wish, that all the devout and pious Souls in the Church, would, after the Example of Christ and his Apostles, join together in Fasting and Praying, upon so solemn Occasions as those are. What a glorious Church? What an excel- Clergy should we then have? But to return to our Christian. The *Lent-Fast* coming but once a Year, and the *Ember Weeks* but once a Quarter, for fear left his Body should

in the mean time grow rampant, or his Paſſions Head-ſtrong and Unruly, the Church orders him to Faſt one Day in every Week, *viz. Friday*, the Day whereon our Lord was Crucified; as alſo the Eves or Vigils of ſome certain *Holy Days*, the better to perform the Duties, and to Praiſe God for the Mercies commemorated, the Day following. And if he be Temperate in all things, and beſides that, obſerves theſe preſcrib'd by our Church, as really Days of Faſting and Abſtinence, it is very much if his Body be not kept in due ſubjection to his Soul. But if at any time he finds it is not, he may add ſome more days as he finds occaſion; eſpecially, *Wedneſdays*, which were alſo obſerv'd by the *Primitive Chriſtians*; and upon which, our Church hath appointed the *Litany* to be uſed, as well as upon *Fridays*. And whatſoever degrees of Grace and Vertue he ſhall attain to, he muſt never think that, ſo long as continues in Health, he ſtands in no need of Faſting. As conſidering, that the great Apoſtle himſelf, was forc'd to *keep his Body under, and bring it into ſubjection, leſt that by any means, when he had Preached unto others, he himſelf ſhould be a caſt-away.* 1 Cor. 9. 27.

By this means therefore our Chriſtian, keeping his Mind continually ſerene, and free from any Annoyance or Diſturbance

from the Humours of the Body, he is always in a right disposition to receive such Impressions as are necessary to the making him a real and true Saint. Which that he may be, the Church useth all the means she can, to keep his Soul continually possessed with a deep Sense of God, and with as high Apprehensions of the great Mysteries of the Gospel, as it is capable of. For which purpose she so orders it, that every thing relating to the Publick Service, which she requires him to perform to God, as well as the Service it self, strikes an Awe and Reverence of the Divine Majesty into him, as being set apart and appropriated only to that use. Thus she appoints some certain Days, wherein to lay aside all other Business, and apply himself wholly to this. Especially she, out of God's own Word, enjoins him to keep holy the first Day in every Week, which is therefore called the *Lord's Day*, because devoted to his Service. Besides which, to keep the great Mysteries of the Gospel always fresh in his Mind and Memory, she prescribes him some certain Days every Year, whereon to commemorate the *Nativity*, *Circumcision* and *Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles*, his *Presentation in the Temple*, his *Passion*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*, and his *Mission of the Holy Ghost*; the *Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin*;

Virgin; with the *Lives and Deaths of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts* did, whonot only propagate the Goſpel in the World, but ſealed it too with their own Blood. For the very ſetting apart of theſe and the like Days, for the publick Worſhipping of God, conduceth very much to his remembring and underſtanding the great things tranſacted on them: and ſo to his better apprehending and admiring the Power and Goodneſs of God diſcovered in them.

And for this reaſon alſo it is, that ſhe requires him to perform his Publick Devotions to God in God's own Houſe, a Place conſecrated wholly to him and his Service. And for his better doing of it there, ſhe appoints one of God's own Miniſters, a Perſon ſet apart for that very Office, to aſſiſt him in it. And ſhe commands this Perſon, at that time, to be in a different Habit from what he wears at any other time: and all to take off our Chriſtian's Thoughts, as much as may be, from all things elſe, and to fix them only upon God and the great Work he is now about. The Place, the Miniſter, the Habit, every one putting him in mind, that he is not now about any Common or Worldly Employment; but in the ſpecial Preſence of Almighty God, worſhipping him, and therefore, both in Soul and Body, ſhould carry

himſelf

himſelf accordingly, with Reverence and Godly Fear.

And then, as for the Service it ſelf, the Church hath provided him ſuch a *Liturgy*, wherein all things are done to his Edifying. So that he can never come to God's Houſe, but, if it be not his own Fault, he may return home again Wiſer and Better than he came: for he can want for nothing but he there prays for it; he can have nothing but he there gives God thanks for it; he can be ignorant of nothing, that is needful for him to know, but he is there taught it. And, leſt he ſhould at any time ſeduced into Error, or tempted to Sin; leſt he ſhould grow flat in his Devotions, cool in his Charity, remiſs in any Duty to God or Man, or careleſs of his own Eternal Good, ſhe hath order'd the Holy Scriptures to be often expounded, or a Sermon preached to him; and that too, not by any one that will undertake it (for then the Remedy might prove worſe than the Diſeaſe) but by one who, by Faſting and Prayer, and the Solemn Impoſition of the Biſhop's Hands, is ordained to that Office; by one who hath ſubſcribed to all the Articles of Religion, by one who hath publickly declared his unfeigned Aſſent and Conſent to the Uſe of all things contained and preſcribed in the Book of Common-Prayer; by one approved

ved of, and licenſed thereunto, by the Biſhop of the Dioceſe, who, if he find juſt Cauſe for it, is empower'd and obliged to take away his Licenſe again, and to ſuſpend from the Execution of his Office. So that if cur Chriſtian lives under a Miniſter that doth not act according to the Rules, or doth not preach according to the Doctrine of the Goſpel, or doth not perform his Duty in every thing as he ought; it is, in a great meaſure, his own fault, in that he doth not acquaint the Biſhop with it, whoſe Office it is to redreſs ſuch Grievances as theſe are. So that if he will himſelf, he may be ſure to have the Word of God rightly, duly and conſtantly adminiſter'd to him: and not only the Word, but likewiſe the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which he is required to receive as oft as poſſibly he can, to put him in mind of what his Saviour hath done and ſuffered for his Sins, and ſo to confirm his Faith in him, inflame his Love to him, and to diſpoſe and qualifie him the better to converſe with Chriſt in Heaven; to which nothing contributes more than frequent Addreſſes to him in this Holy Sacrament upon Earth.

Thus therefore it is, that he who holds conſtant Communion with our Church, is continually employ'd by her about ſome or other of thoſe Means which Chriſt hath

ordained

ordained for his Salvation, and to which he hath promiſed the Aſſiſtance of his own Spirit. By virtue whereof, the Chriſtian, we have hitherto diſcourſed of, is enabled *to deny Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World.* But having ſpent ſome time in ſuch holy Exerciſes as theſe are, we muſt ſuppoſe him at length to be ſeized with ſome Diſtemper, in order to his Departure into the other World. And then the Church, to ſhew her great care of him to the laſt, requires the Miniſter of the Pariſh where he lives, to go and give him a ſolemn Viſit. And that he may be ſure to have the beſt Directions that can be given him at that great Juncture, She her ſelf hath drawn up an Order for the *Viſitation* of him, and likewiſe for the *Adminiſtration* of the Holy Communion to him; which is the beſt Cordial he can take to ſupport his Spirits, and carry him through the great Work which he hath now to do. And when it hath pleaſed Almighty God, of his great Mercy, to take unto himſelf the Soul of this our dear Brother, the Miniſter, by the Order and in the Name of the Church, commits his Body to the Ground, *in ſure and certain Hope of a joyful Reſurrection to Eternal Life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*

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Thus we see how our Christian from his first Admission into the Church Militant upon Earth, is conducted, and governed all along by her, until at length he is advanced to the Church Triumphant in Heaven. From whence it is easy to observe what an excellent Method she proceeds in, and what effectual Means she useth for the attaining so great an End: And by consequence, how necessary it is for all of us to be so added to the Church, as to continue stedfast in her Communion, and carefully to follow all her Directions, if ever we desire to be saved. For although I have instanced only in one single Person, we are all equally concerned in what hath been said of him. Yea, every one of us should look upon himself, as the Person spoken of all along. For I hope we are all baptized, and so admitted into the Church, as I supposed him to be. And therefore if we do but observe these Rules, which she out of God's holy Word hath laid before us, as I supposed him to do, there is no doubt but that we also ere long, shall be glorified Saints in Heaven.

But I am very sensible, that for all the great Care that our Church taketh of all her Children, many of them are very undutiful and disobedient to her, and so careless of their own Salvation, that they

they do not only neglect, but despise the Means which she administers for the Attainment of it. But what then doth she do with such as these? In short, she in great Wisdom and Prudence makes use of all the fair Means that can be thought of, for the reclaiming of them. But if that will not do, she delivers them over to *Satan*, for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord. But seeing the Excellency of our Church, appeareth in the Exercise of her Power, as much as in any thing else, it may not be amiss if we take a take a short View of that wise and excellent Method which she observeth in it.

First, therefore our Church being, by the Blessing of God, of the same extent with the Kingdom in which we live, and as so, subject to the same Prince, as its supream Governour upon Earth, for the better Management of that Power which Christ hath left with it, it is divided into two Provinces, over each of which there is an Archbishop, each Province is subdivided into several Dioceses, over every one whereof there is a Bishop: In every Diocese, there is one or more Archdeacons: Every Archdeaconry is divided into several Deanaries, and every Deanary into several Parishes. And in every Parish, as

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there is a Prieſt rightly ordained for the *Adminiſtration of the Word and Sacraments* to all the Chriſtians that live there, ſo there are other Officers called *Church-Wardens*, choſen every year, and appointed, not only to look to the Fabrick of the Church belonging to the ſaid Pariſh, and to provide all things neceſſary for the worſhipping of God in it; but likewiſe to inſpect the Lives and Actions of all the Chriſtians that live there; to take notice of all that live in any notorious Sin, or neglect the means which God hath ordain'd for their Salvation, and to certifie and preſent their Names to ſuch Officers which the Church hath appointed to conſider what to do in ſuch caſes. And although ſuch Perſons, being Chriſtians, are obliged by their Religion, to take all the Care they can of their Neighbours Souls, and therefore to acquaint the Church with their evil and pernicious Courſes, that ſhe may interpoſe her Power for the reclaiming of them, yet to bind them more ſtrictly to it, when they are admitted into that Office, they take a ſolemn Oath, in the Preſence of Almighty God, truly and faithfully to execute the ſame, to the beſt of their Skill and Knowledge. And that none of them may be ignorant of what they are to preſent, they have *Articles of Enquiry* deliver'd

deliver'd to them, wherein all and every thing and Perſon preſentable, is plainly and diſtinctly ſet down.

And as this is certainly the beſt and ſureſt way that the Church could ever find out, whereby to underſtand which of her Members either neglect thoſe Duties which ſhould further their Salvation, or commit ſuch Sins as will impede and hinder it; ſo is the Courſe too that ſhe takes for the correcting and reforming them. For as the Church-wardens are obliged to make their Preſentments twice a Year, and may do it oftner if Occaſion require it: So is the Biſhop obliged to go about his Dioceſe once every three Years, that he may underſtand the ſtate of the Flock committed to him, of which he muſt one Day give a ſtrict Account to the great Shepherd of Souls. And leſt any thing ſhould happen in the mean time, that may require a more ſpeedy Examination, he, according to the Cuſtom of the Primitive and Catholick Church, hath one or more Archdeacons under him, canonically Ordained, Authorized, and required every one to viſit ſo much of the Dioceſe as is under his Juriſdiction, once a Year, or oftner if need be, to receive the foreſaid Preſentments, and to inſpect, and, what in him lies, reform all Irregularities, either in Clergy or Laity. And more-

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over that the Church may never want an opportunity of being informed of any Misdemeanors that she is bound to take Cognisance of, she hath other Officers both under the Bishop and Arch-Deacon, who keep her Courts all the Year long, as occasion happens, and have power to cite all Delinquents that are presented, and to Examine and Try all such Ecclesiastical Causes and Matters as are brought before them.

But here we must observe, that as the Church-Wardens of every Parish who present Offenders to any of these Courts, are always Lay-men, so the Chancellors, Commissaries, Officials, and other Officers in these Courts, who receive and examine such Presentments, are ordinarily Lay-men too. And it is but reasonable, and in some Sense necessary they should be so. For if none but Clergy-men should search into the Faults of the Laity, the Laity might be apt to suspect they were too severely dealt with. Whereas being tryed by Men of their own rank and brotherhood before Sentence is passed upon them, they cannot blame the Church for it, nor imagine that She can have any other Design upon them, but only to do them good and make them better. Besides that, the Causes which are brought into these Courts, are many,

and take up a great deal of time before they can be brought to an Iſſue, and therefore if Clergymen only ſhould be employ'd in them, it would take them off too much from the Miniſtry and of the Word and Sacraments, which they are oblig'd by their Office continually to attend. Eſpecially conſidering that the Cauſes are not only many, but diverſe too, and ſome very intricate and mixt; ſo that to ſearch into the bottom of them all, and fully to underſtand what is juſt and meet to be done in every one of them, requires great knowledge and skill in the whole Body of the Eccleſiaſtical Laws, and the Temporal too, ſo far as they any way concern the Church: Which no Man can attain to, without making it his conſtant Buſineſs and Study. Which not conſiſting with the many other Duties incumbent upon thoſe who are Ordained to any Holy Function; the Church always found it neceſſary that her Biſhops, and all that Exerciſe her Juriſdiction under them, ſhould have ſome of her other Members learned in the Laws, to direct and aſſiſt them in the Adminiſtration of it, and under them to tranſact and try all Cauſes relating thereunto. Which doubtleſs, all things conſidered, is the beſt way the Church could ever think of whereby to ſecure her Governours from being

being malign'd, her Laws from being violated, and so her Members from being injured through mistake or ignorance.

Neither must we look upon this as any Novel Invention, but as the Sense and Practice of the universal Church for many Ages: For we find such Ecclesiastical Officers, as those are, mentioned near 1200 Years ago by *Justinian* the Emperor, who in his Code and Novel, sometimes calls them by their Greek Name (a) *Ecdicos Ecclesiæ*, or *Ecclesiecdicos*, sometimes by the Latin, (b) *Defensores Ecclesiæ*; that is, properly, Church Advocates, Ecclesiastical Lawyers, and sometimes *Episcoporum Ecclesiecdices*, the Bishops Ecclesiastical Advocates, which he reckons amongst (c) Lay-Officers, and yet supposeth them to be in every Church, and to take care of the Affairs of it under the Bishop. Before this we meet with them in the (d) Novels of *Valentinian* the Third, as also in the Canons of the fourth General Council, held at *Chalcedon*, *A. D.* 451. which requires that Clergymen and Monks which stay at *Constantinople* without having any business there, should be expelled thence by the (e) *Ecdik*, or as we say, the Chancellor of the Church. And elsewhere the same General Council reckons

(a) L. 42. C. de Episcop. & cler.
(b) L. 6. C. de his qui ad Ecclesiam confug.
Novel. 56.
(c) L. 42. C de Episc. & cler. § 9. L. 34. C. de Episcop. Audientia, § 5.
(d) Valentin. Novel. tit. 12.
(e). Chalc. can. 23.

(f) *Ibid. can.* 2.

these *(f) Ecdiks* or Advocates, amongst these Ecclesiastical Officers which are not admitted into Holy Orders, and yet ought not to give any Money for their Places. From whence it appears that these Lay Officers were at that time received and established in all the Provinces, and Dioceses of the Universal Church; for otherwise this general Council consisting of above Six hundred Bishops, gathered together from all Parts of the Christian World, would never have made any Laws about them.

How long before this they were brought into the Church I shall not undertake to determine. Only this we know that the *African* Bishops assembled in *(g)* Council *A. D.* 407. made it their request to the Emperors, *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, that they might have liberty to chuse and constitute Church-Advocates out of those who pleaded in the Civil Courts, who might manage the Affairs, and defend the Rights and Privileges of the Church there. And that this Request was readily granted, is plain from the Rescript of the said Emperors to that purpose, directed within Six Months after to the Proconsul of *Africa*, still extant in the *(h)* *Theodosian* Code. From whence it seems that those Advocates were not suffered before this time to plead

(g) *Concil. Carthag. can.* 100. *Edit. Oxon.*

(h) L. 38. *C. T. Episcopis Eccles. & cler.*

plead for the Church in the Civil Courts of *Africa*; but it doth not follow but they might be employ'd before, both there and elſewhere in the Eccleſiaſtical. And it is very probable that theſe Offices began to be erected, if not before, at leaſt ſoon after the Empire became Chriſtian, ſo that the Church had free Liberty to Exerciſe her Power and Authority *in* it, and was not only allow'd to do it, but countenanced and aſſiſted by the Secular Power. For then there was a Neceſſity of having ſuch Officers, not only for the Reaſons before mentioned, but likewiſe, becauſe the Emperors themſelves, in Favour of the Church, put forth ſeveral Edicts and Laws concerning Eccleſiaſtical Perſons and Matters, which being drawn up in the ſame Form and Manner, and intermix'd with their Civil Laws, could never be duly executed but by Perſons skilled in the Imperial as well as the Eccleſiaſtical Laws, and in the way and manner of proceeding upon them. And therefore from that time forward it was neceſſary that ſuch Advocates as had been trained up in the Civil Law, ſhould be appointed and empowered to order and manage the Eccleſiaſtical Courts under the Biſhop in every Dioceſe, that ſo both the Laws of the Empire that had any relation to the

Church, and thoſe which were made by the Church it ſelf, might be duly executed in due Form and manner, ſo as not to contradict, but be aſſiſtant to one another.

But at what time, and for what Reaſons ſoever theſe Officers were at firſt brought into the Church, it is manifeſt, from the aforeſaid Canons of the Fourth General Council, that the Univerſal Church had then received them: And that they have been all along continued ever ſince, can be doubted of by none that are Converſant in Church Hiſtory. Neither can any Man yet imagine that the Univerſal Church for ſo many Ages together ſhould agree in ſuch a thing as this, but upon very good Grounds and Reaſons. Howſoever, the general Practice of the Catholick Church is a ſufficient Obligation as well as Warrant to every particular Church to obſerve the ſame as near as it can. And therefore it was that our Church at the Reformation, looking upon herſelf as oblig'd to hold Communion with the Catholick, as well as to ſeparate from the Romiſh Church, retained this Ancient and General Form of keeping her Courts by Advocates learned in the Civil and Canon Law; who are nominated and approved of by the Biſhop in

every Dioceſs, but receive their Power and Authority not only from him, but from the Laws of the Church: yea, and of the State too. There being ſcarce any Cuſtom or Uſage (upon which the Common Law of the Land is grounded) in the whole Kingdom that can plead longer Preſcription than this can.

But ſeeing theſe, as all other Courts in the World, may be liable to abuſes and corruptions, to prevent them as much as may be, the Church in her Canons doth not only require a (i) ſolemn Oath to be taken by every one that ſhall be admitted into any Office there, to deal uprightly and juſtly in the ſame, without reſpect or favour of Reward; but hath likewiſe provided (k) ſuitable Puniſhments to be inflicted upon theſe who ſhall either neglect their Duty, exceed their Commiſſion, or do any thing unbeſeeming the place they are in: And if, notwithſtanding all this, any one ſhall be unjuſtly dealt with, or but think himſelf to be ſo, he may appeal from the lower to the higher Courts, from the Arch-Deacon to the Biſhop; from the Biſhop to the Arch-Biſhop; and from him to the Queen, who being in all her Dominions ſupreme Governour over all Perſons, in all Cauſes, as well Eccleſiaſtical as Temporal, as it is neceſſary that ſhe

(i) *Can.* 127.

(k) *Can.* 134.

ſhould have theſe Eccleſiaſtical as well as Temporal Courts under her, where ſuch Cauſes may be judged, ſo when they are brought up ſo high as to herſelf, they muſt needs be finally determined, foraſmuch as from her no Appeal can be to any other Court or Perſon upon Earth.

Now theſe Courts being thus Eſtabliſhed in the Church: When any Offender is preſented into any of them, he is cited to appear there, which if he neglect or refuſe to do, he is pronounced Contumacious, one that reſiſteth and contemneth the Power that Chriſt hath given to his Church, which for many Reaſons was always judged one of the greateſt Sins that a Chriſtian can be guilty of: and therefore is proceeded againſt accordingly. But if he appear, his Cauſe is impartially ſearched into; and if upon due Examination he be found Innocent, he is preſently diſcharged: but if he appears to be guilty of any notorious Crime, which the Church is bound to take notice of, ſhe uſeth all means poſſible to bring him to a juſt Senſe of his Sin, to a hearty Repentance for it, and to make what Satisfaction he can for the Offence that he hath given to all good Chriſtians by it. But if all other means prove ineffectual, ſhe caſts him out of her Communion,

munion, and so from the Society of all good Christians, according to the saying of our Lord, *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man, and a Publican.* Mat. 18. 17. But so, that if he shall afterwards repent and submit himself, the Church is always ready to receive him into her Bosom again, there to nourish, and provide all things for him that he may be saved.

Thus in that of our own, I have briefly run through the whole Constitution of the Catholick Church, and the several means that are used in it, and in it only, for the Salvation of Mens Souls, which whosoever seriously considers, can never wonder that they who shall be saved, should be added to the Church.

Nothing now remains but to shew what Influence the consideration of these things should have upon our Minds and Actions, which shall be soon dispatch'd. For if we recollect what hath been said upon this Subject, and lay it so together that we may take a full view of the whole method observed in the Church, for the making us Holy here, and Happy for ever, we cannot but easily see, both what Necessity there is of our being added to the Church in general, and what infinite cause we have to give our most humble and hearty thanks to God, both for his settling

and

and reſtoring ſuch a Church as this is to us. A Church wherein all the means of Grace and Salvation are ſo duly and effectually Adminiſtred to us, that if we be not failing to our ſelves in the uſe of them, we cannot but be ſaved. A Church ſo exactly conformable to the Catholick in all things, that none can ſeparate from her without making a Schiſm in Chriſt's Myſtical Body, and conſequently endangering the Salvation of his own Soul. A Church ſo far exceeding thoſe of *Rome* and *Geneva*, that would either Papiſts or Sectaries lay aſide their Prejudices, and Impartially conſider what our Church is, and compare it with their own, they would need no other Arguments to perſwade them to return unto her, and to live and die in conſtant Communion with her. A Church, to ſay no more, as Orthodox in its Doctrine, as regular in its Diſcipline, as grave and ſolemn in its Worſhip, as agreeable to Scripture Rules, as well accommodated to the whole Deſign of the Goſpel for the bringing of Souls to Heaven, as any Church in the whole World. And that ſuch a Church as this ſhould be at firſt planted amongſt us, and and after it had been deſtroy'd by the Malice of the Devil and his Agents ſhould be again reſtored to us by the immediate hand

of

of God, who can think of it without adoring the Hand that did it?

But we muſt remember to ſhew forth his Praiſe for ſo great a Mercy, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, by giving up our ſelves wholly to his Service, according to the Rules and Orders of the Church which he hath thus graciouſly ſettled amongſt us; that as we have the beſt of Churches, we may be likewiſe the beſt of People; and ſo ſhame our Adverſaries on all ſides into an hearty compliance with our Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, by letting them ſee how far we exceed them in true Piety and Devotion; and read the Excellency of our Church, in the Excellency of our Lives, who hold Communion with her. By this means, as many, by the Bleſſing of God, have been lately added to our Church, there will be daily more and more. This alſo would be a moſt effectual way, whereby to Secure and Defend our Church againſt *Hereſie* and *Schiſm*, againſt *Popery* and *Superſtition*, againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, and againſt all thoſe Diabolical Stratagems, and Devices, thoſe Seditious Principles and Practices, whereby it was deſtroyed once, and was like to have been ſo again, but very lately. For if we do but Live anſwerably to the Means that we enjoy, and ſerve, and pleaſe, and worſhip,

ſhip, and obey God as our Church directs us, we need not fear what Men or Devils can do againſt us, nor concern our ſelves with what may, or what may not happen hereafter; but ſtill truſt in God, who as he hath delivered us, he will yet deliver us. We have no cauſe to doubt of his Kindneſs and Favour to our Church, having had ſo great, ſo wonderful Experience of it already.

But for that end, we muſt be ſure to live as in the true Faith and Fear of God, ſo alſo in humble Obedience, and Stedfaſt Loyalty to the Queen. For that is abſolutely neceſſary, not only as a Duty in it ſelf to God, but likewiſe as a Means for the ſupporting our Church, by ſtrengthening the Hands of her, whom God is pleaſed to make the happy Inſtrument of preſerving it to us. And therefore I cannot but admire, with what confidence any can profeſs any value or kindneſs for the Church, and yet talk or act Seditiouſly againſt the Queen. For, that is to pretend to uphold the Church with one Hand, and to endeavour in good earneſt to pluck it down with the other. Be ſure, all the real Members of our Church, are as faithful Subjects to the Crown; neither can they be otherwiſe. Foraſmuch as the Spirit which runs through the whole Body of the *Catholick*, and by conſe-

quence

quence our Church, as I have ſhewn, puts them upon Univerſal Obedience to all the Commands of God; and to theſe amongſt the reſt, of Honouring the King, and being ſubject and obedient to the Higher Powers. And hence it is, that as we never heard of any Rebels in the *Primitive Church*, ſo neither are there, nor can be any ſuch amongſt thoſe, who are really of ours; which is the great Glory of our Church, and a clear demonſtration of its Apoſtolical Conſtitution, and that, which if duly conſidered, would make all the Chriſtian Princes in the World, endeavour to reform the Churches Seated in their Dominions, according to her Pattern and Example: And to protect them too, when they are ſo reform'd; altho' it was for nothing elſe, but to keep their Kingdoms quiet, and ſo make the Government eaſie to themſelves: much more, if they reſpect their own and their Peoples Souls, that they may be Saved.

But that we may all be ſo, we muſt not think it enough to be admitted into the Church, and made viſible Members of it. For though all that ſhall be ſaved are added to the Church; yet it doth not follow, that all who are ſo added to the Church ſhall be ſaved. It is true, all ſuch are in a ſtate of Salvation, and in the way to it,

but

but except they continue in that ſtate, and walk in that way, they can never attain to the End of their Faith, even the Salvation of their Souls.

Wherefore, I humbly pray and adviſe all that deſire in good earneſt to be Saved, that you would not content you ſelves with being Members of the Church in general; nor yet with doing only ſome of thoſe things which ſhe requireth of you; but to uſe all the Means, and obſerve the whole Method, which ſhe out of God's Holy Word hath preſcribed for that end, otherwiſe you will certainly deprive your ſelves of ſomething that would have been very Beneficial, if not Neceſſary for you; as ye may eaſily ſee, if ye will but look back upon that ſhort Scheme which I have now given you of it. As for example, I ſuppoſe ye are all Baptiz'd, but are ye Confirm'd too? If ye be not, ye ſtill want one of thoſe Means which the Holy Apoſtles, and their Succeſſors, in all Ages have uſed, whereby to obtain the Gifts and Graces of God's Holy Spirit for thoſe who are Baptized. And ſuppoſe you are Confirm'd; Do ye alſo obſerve the ſeveral *Faſts* of the Church? If ye do not, it will be very difficult, if not impoſſible, to keep your Bodies in that due frame and temper, as that they may be fit Temples for the Holy Ghoſt

to

to dwell in. And ſuppoſing ye Faſt, do ye alſo pray to Almighty God, both publicky and privately? And do ye perform your publick Devotions to God, in that form, after that manner, and at ſuch times as the Church hath appointed? Do ye hearken to God's Holy Word, as Read and Expounded by her? Do ye receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as oft as ſhe is ready to give it you? If ye neglect all, or or any of theſe and the like means of Salvation, which are there adminiſtred, you had as good be out of the Church as in it, and have no more ground to expect to be Saved, than you have to accompliſh any other end without uſing the Means.

Whereas, do but ye truly and conſtantly obſerve all and every one of thoſe Means which our Church, as I have ſhewn, adminiſtreth to you, and truſt, and depend, as ye ought, upon the Promiſes of God, for the aſſiſtance and co-operation of his Holy Spirit with them; and I dare aſſure you in the Name, and in the Preſence of my great Lord and Maſter *Jeſus Chriſt*; you ſhall ſoon find them, by his Grace and Bleſſing, effectual to the great ends and purpoſes for which they are Ordain'd, even to the enlightning of your Minds, to the regulating of your Paſſions, to the confirming of your Faith, to the mortifying of

your

your Lusts, and to the making you real and true Saints, sincerely pious towards God, Loyal to our Sovereign, Just and Charitable towards all Men: By which means ye will be fitted and qualified, not only for the Pardon of your Sins, by the Blood of *Jesus*, but likewise for Heaven and Eternal Glory. So that when ye depart out of this World, ye will be admitted into the blessed Society of the Holy Angels, and the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, where you will live with God himself, and laud and magnifie his great and glorious Name, both for his continuing his Church to you, and for his adding you to his Church, that ye might be Saved, by the Merits and Mediation of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*: To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, and Glory, now, and for ever. *Amen*.

SERMON

SERMON V.

JOHN xii. 20.

And there were certain Greeks among them, that came up to worſhip at Feaſt.

WE are here met together at this time to do the Work, the great Work which we were all made for, even *to worſhip him that made us.* And therefore, it will be very ſeaſonable to conſider what that Work really is, and how it ought to be always done. For I cannot but in Charity believe that they who conſtantly attend the places of God's Publick Worſhip, do truly intend and deſire to worſhip God there; and that their Failures in the Performance of it do generally proceed either from Ignorance or Miſtake of the Way and Manner how to perform it. For it cannot be eaſily imagined, that if People did

rightly understand what it is to worship God, they should ever fancy that coming to Church, and continuing there whilst another prays and preaches, is all the Worship that he that made them requires of them. And yet, to our shame be it spoken, this is all that is done by most of our Congregations instead of *Worshipping God*.

The Truth is, we have, in a great measure, lost the right manner of performing Religious Worship, in a Crowd of Disputes about the Object to which it ought to be perform'd. The *Church of Rome* hath of late degenerated so far from the Doctrine and Practice of the Primitive and Universal Church, that they who live in her Communion do commonly perform the same Acts of Religious Worship to Creatures, which they do to the great Creator of the World, *God Blessed for ever*. This we justly condemn them for, as judging it one of the greatest Sins that a Church or Person can be guilty of. But in the midst of this our just Zeal against the *Papists*, for giving as much Worship to Creatures as they do to the Creator; we must have a care of falling into the other Extream, even of giving no more Worship to our Creator, than what may be given to a Creature; which is the great Fault of too many among us. For the reforming or preventing whereof,

for

for the future, it will be neceſſary to lay aſide all Prejudices, and conſider impartially, what that is which Almighty God would have us do, when he commands us to *worſhip* him; or what is the true Notion of *Religious Worſhip*, properly ſo called, as it is diſtinguiſhed from all other Duties which we ow to God, and is commonly expreſſed in Scripture by the Word προσκυνησις, *Adoration*, and ſo is always diſtinguiſhed from λατρεία, which ſignifies the *ſerving of God* in general, and not only that particular Act whereby we are properly ſaid to *adore* and *worſhip* him.

This therefore is that, which by his Grace and Aſſiſtance I ſhall endeavour to do, in the Explication of the Words which I have now read; *And there were certain Greeks among them, which came up to worſhip at the Feaſt.*

Where by *Greeks* we are to underſtand ſuch Gentiles, who by converſing with the *Jews*, or elſe by ſome other means, had attained to the Knowledge, and embraced the Worſhip of the true God. Theſe are often mentioned in the *Acts* of the Holy Apoſtles, where they were called *Devout* or *Religious Greeks* and *Proſelytes*, becauſe altho they did not communicate with the *Jews* in their Sacrifices and Offerings, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the *Moſaic*

Law, yet they worſhipped the ſame God as they did.

Of ſuch *Greeks* or *Gentiles* as theſe were, it is here ſaid, that certain of them were now among the Apoſtles and Diſciples of Chriſt, and that they *came up to worſhip at the Feaſt*. Where there are three things to be obſerved concerning them;

I. The *Place* whither they came, they *came up*.
II. The *Time* when, at the *Feaſt*.
III. The *Buſineſs* they came about, *to worſhip*. *They came up to worſhip at the Feaſt*.

Firſt, the *Place*, was *they came up*, that to *Hieruſalem*, and to the Temple there; which being then the only Place upon Earth, dedicated to the Service of the moſt high God, by his own Appointment, it was, upon that Account, the beſt and higheſt Place upon Earth, all other Places being much inferior to it. And therefore whatſoever Country or City theſe *Greeks* came from, they might be truly ſaid, as they are here, to *come up*, as to an higher Place, when they came to the Temple at *Hieruſalem*.

And it is very obſervable, that theſe *Greeks* acknowledging the true God, could not

not but know withal, that he being every where present, they might have performed the same Worship to him in any other Place, which they did at *Hierusalem*. And yet, how far soever they dwelt off, they still came thither to do it. And the reason was, because their very going to worship *there*, was a professing their Acknowledgment of the God, which was *there* worshipped. And besides that, they know that God, had promised to meet them, and to bless them in such Places where his Name was recorded, in a more especial manner than in any other place: in that he had said, *In all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*, *Exod.* xx. 24. From whence they could not but conclude it to be their Interest as well as Duty to go to *Hierusalem* to worship, that being the only place at that time, where God had *recorded his Name*, and by consequence where he had appointed *to come unto them*, and *to bless them*.

And certainly this Promise was never intended only for the Old Testament, or the Temple then standing; for it runs in general terms, *In all places where I record my Name*. And he must have very mean thoughts of Christ and his Gospel, who can suffer himself to be persuaded that the

Name of God is not *recorded* in our Chriſtian Churches, as well as it was in the Jewiſh Tabernacle or Temple. For this is to prefer the Law before the Goſpel, and to make the Condition of the Jews much better than that of Chriſtians. Foraſmuch as they always had ſome place or other among them, where God had promiſed to come unto them, and ſo to be ſpecially preſent with them, and to bleſs them; whereas, according to this opinion, we have none. But he that rightly conſiders the Nature and Deſign of the Goſpel, muſt needs acknowledge, that as it excels the Law in many particulars, it comes ſhort of it in none: much leſs in this which is of ſo great Importance. But that whatſoever it was whereby the Name of God is ſaid to be *recorded* among the Jews, the ſame is in as high, if not in a much higher manner, among us at this time, and howſoever it was that God was *ſpecially preſent* in ſuch places then, without all doubt he is ſo ſtill.

What it is that conſtitutes the *Shechinah* or *Special Preſence* of God in places that are conſecrated to him, and ſo have his Name recorded in them, it is not neceſſary for us to determine. I know it hath been the received Opinion of late, that it is the Attendance of the Holy Angels there that

doth it, and do not queſtion but they are as certainly preſent in our Chriſtian Churches, as ever they were in the Temple at *Hieruſalem*. For that St. *Paul* himſelf aſſures us of. But God is not therefore ſaid to be preſent in ſuch places, becauſe the Angels are ſo; but the Angels are therefore preſent there, becauſe he is ſo in a more eſpecial manner than elſewhere. And the *Specialty* of his Preſence ſeems rather to conſiſt in thoſe ſpecial Diſcoveries, which he is pleaſed to make of himſelf, and thoſe ſpecial Bleſſings and Aſſiſtances, which God the Holy Ghoſt vouchſafeth to his People, in ſuch Places where his Name is recorded. Hence, ſeveral of the learned Rabbins, by the *Shechinah*, underſtand the *Holy Ghoſt*. But I ground not this Opinion upon any Rabbinical Notions, but upon the Words of St. *Paul*; where he ſaith, *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.* 1 Cor. 3. 16. From whence it is evident, that it is the *Inhabitation of the* Spirit, which makes a Place, a *Temple of God*, a place of *his ſpecial Reſidence*. And therefore as the Spirit is ſaid to dwell in the real Saints, becauſe he actuates, influences, and aſſiſts them in what they do; ſo is he ſaid to dwell in a Church or Temple, becauſe he is there always ready to beſtow his ſpecial Grace and

Aſſiſtance, even all manner of ſpiritual Bleſſings upon all ſuch as come thither, rightly diſpoſed to perform their Devotions to him. Which ſeems alſo to be the purport of the Promiſe it ſelf, *in all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bleſs thee*, that is, I will ſo come unto thee, as to bleſs thee in a more eſpecal Manner than in any other Place. And then it is no wonder that the Holy Angels, according to the general Senſe of Scripture and Antiquity, are always preſent in ſuch Places, to admire the Goodneſs of their Lord and Maſter to his Creatures here below, and to be ready upon all Occaſions, to diſtribute ſuch Bleſſings, as they are capable of conveying to them. As we ſee the Story of the Eunuch, Treaſurer to *Candace* Queen of the *Æthiopians*; who having been to worſhip at the Temple, an Angel was preſently ſent, to order *Philip* to go and meet the ſaid Eunuch, and to bring him into the Church, that he might be ſayed.

But we need not trouble our ſelves with ſuch nice Speculation about it. It is ſufficient for our preſent pupoſe, that the Moſt High God, according to his own Promiſe, and the Senſe and Experience of his Church in all Ages, is preſent in all ſuch places where his Name is recorded in a more e-

ſpecial and peculiar manner than it is elſe-
where. For hence it is, that pious Chriſti-
ans always frequented ſuch places as were
dedicated to the Service of God, and ſo
had his Name recorded in them. Hence
it was that heretofore they were ſo zealous
and forward to erect and dedicate ſuch
places. They needed not in the Primitive
times, as we do now, the Edicts of Em-
perours, or Acts of Parliament for the
Building of Churches; their own Piety
and Zeal for the Glory of God and the Sal-
vation of Men prompted them ſufficient-
ly to it. Hence alſo it is, that the very
ſetting apart and conſecrating of ſuch pla-
ces for the Service and Worſhip of God,
was always reckoned, and truly is, a very
great Act of Religion, in that we thereby
demonſtrate our acknowledgment of his
Power and Sovereignty over us, of his
Love and Goodneſs to us, and likewiſe of
his Right and Propriety in what we have,
in that we pay him Tribute and do him
Homage for it, by devoting ſome part of
that Land or Eſtate that he hath given us,
unto him of whom we hold the whole.
Hence laſtly it was, that the *Greeks* in my
Text came up to *Hieruſalem*, that ſo they
might worſhip God in his own Houſe, the
proper place where his Publick Worſhip
ſhould be performed, and where nothing

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else ſhould be performed, but what hath Relation thereunto. So that the ſame Acts, which in other places may be Acts only of *civil Reſpect* to Men, when performed in the Church to God, they become Acts of *Religious Worſhip* unto him.

The next Thing to be conſider'd, is the *Time*, when theſe *Greeks* came up to Worſhip, *at the Feaſt*, that is, the Paſſover, as the Context ſheweth. As if they did not think it enough to worſhip God at any other *place*, but they came up to the *Temple* to do it *there*; ſo neither did they think it enough to worſhip him at any other *time*, but they came up at the *Feaſt*, to do it *then*. As knowing that *Time* and *Place*, though they be but Circumſtances, they are neceſſary Circumſtances of Religious Worſhip, and therefore appointed by God himſelf; who commands, that a due Reſpect ſhall be given to both; *Ye ſhall keep my Sabbath, and ye ſhall reverence my Sanctuary*, Levit. 19. 20. Indeed, take away all Diſtinction betwixt Holy and Common Times and Places, and what would become of Religion in the World? If no *Places* were ſet apart where Men ſhould worſhip God, they would do it *no where*; and, if no *Times*, they would *never do* it. Hence it is that God, and under him the Church, in all Ages hath taken

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ſpecial Care, that as ſome part of the Earth which we live upon, ſo ſome part of the Time alſo that we live in it, ſhould be devoted wholly to him who gives it to us. And they that would keep their Hearts always in an Holy Frame and Temper, muſt make Conſcience of obſerving ſuch *Times*, as well as *Places*, that are ſet apart for theſe Holy Purpoſes. As the *Greeks* here did, who came up to worſhip *at the Feaſt*.

But that which I chiefly deſign to ſpeak to, is the *Buſineſs* they came about; they came up to *Worſhip*. To *Worſhip*? what is that? Did they come to love God, to fear him, to truſt on him, or the like? No ſurely, they did all this at Home; at leaſt they were bound to do it in all Places, and at all Times, as well as at *Hieruſalem* upon the Feaſt Day. And beſides, theſe being Acts purely of the Soul, and ſo confined within their own Breaſts, none could take notice of them, but God and their own Conſciences; whereas to all Religious Worſhip it is plainly neceſſary, that there be ſome Overt Act, whereby theſe inward Motions of the Soul to God may be diſcovered and repreſented unto others. But did they come then to hear God's Word? I do not doubt but they had the Law or Prophets read, and perhaps expounded

pounded to them. And ſo far as that was the Means whereby they learned how to worſhip God aright, it had ſome Relation to it. But the Scriptures plainly diſtinguiſh betwixt *reading* or *hearing of God's Word*, and *worſhipping* of him. For it is written, that *they ſpent one fourth part of the Day in reading in the Book of the Law; and another fourth part in confeſſing and worſhipping the Lord their God*, Neh. 9. 3. From whence it appears, that theſe were two ſeveral Duties, perform'd at ſeveral times of the Day.

But what then did they come to do? Did they come to pray, or to praiſe God? Queſtionleſs they did. The Place they came to, was called the *Houſe of Prayer*; that being the great Work it was deſign'd for. Neither can it be deny'd, but there are ſuch Acts, without which it is impoſſible to worſhip God aright. But yet in the place laſt mention'd, although they *confeſſed* (under which is comprehended both Prayer and Praiſe) and *worſhipped* both at the ſame time; yet theſe are reckon'd as two diſtinct Duties. And indeed, the *worſhipping of God*, properly ſo called, doth not conſiſt ſo much in theſe Acts themſelves, as in the Way and Manner of performing them.

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But then the Queſtion is, how this muſt be done? After what manner theſe *Greeks* did it; and we ought to carry our ſelves in all our Addreſſes to the moſt High God? ſo as that we may be properly ſaid to *worſhip him*? Which being a Queſtion that concerns Almighty God himſelf, and his Worſhip and Honour, I ſhall not undertake to reſolve it by my own Reaſon or Judgment, but ſhall conſult his Holy Oracles, where we have many Things which ſingly, much more jointly conſidered, will fully diſcover his Will and Pleaſure to us in this Particular. Firſt therefore we may obſerve, that the Holy Ghoſt never uſeth any Word whereby to expreſs that *Worſhip* which is due to God; but what ſignifies ſuch humble Geſtures of our Bodies before him, which may expreſs our Awe and Fear of him. There are but two Words that I know of in all the *Hebrew* Tongue, that are uſed to denote the *Worſhip* of the True God, or are ever ſo tranſlated into other Languages; and they are סגד and השתחוה whereof the firſt ſignifies, *Falling down* in general; the other, *Bowing* or *Proſtrating our ſelves before him*; and ſo they are commonly tranſlated, as well as by *worſhipping*. The ſame may be ſaid of the *Greek* Word προσκυνέω, ſo often uſed in the New Teſtament, and particularly in

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my Text. From whence we may clearly ſee, what the Holy Ghoſt means by *worſhipping God*. For how can we know his Mind better, than by the Words whereby he declareth it? But he always expreſſeth *the Worſhip of God*, by ſuch Words as ſignifie our *Boving* or *Proſtrating our ſelves* before him. And therefore we may certainly conclude, it is his Mind and Pleaſure, that we ſhould always perform our Worſhip to God by ſuch humble Geſtures as theſe are.

In the next place we may obſerve, that the moſt High God doth expreſly forbid us to *bow down* to any Image or Idol, as in the ſecond Commandment; *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image, nor the likeneſs of any thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Waters under the Earth: Thou ſhalt not bow down thy ſelf to them, nor ſerve them.* But why ſhould he forbid us to do this to an Image or Idol, if it be not an eſſential part of that Worſhip which is due to himſelf? Or what can be more plain, than that he commands us to bow down to himſelf, in that he forbids our doing it to any thing elſe inſtead of himſelf? And beſides, it is acknowledged by all, that he who *bows to an Idol*, is, by vertue of this Commandment, guilty of *Idolatry*, in that he worſhips that Idol,

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which could not be, unleſs *Bowing* itſelf be an Act of *Religious Worſhip* due to the true God.

Moreover we may obſerve, that the Holy Ghoſt, that we might not be miſtaken in a Matter of ſo great Importance, doth often explain himſelf what he means by worſhipping God: As *David* inſpired by him, cries out, *Oh come, let us worſhip and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker*, Pſal. 95. 6. Where *Bowing* and *Kneeling* are plainly added to expreſs the ſeveral Poſtures to be uſed when we *worſhip*. So alſo, where he tells us, how the Saints of Old were wont to *worſhip God*.

As for Example, when *Abraham*'s Servant perceived that God had proſpered his Journey, it is ſaid, *And the Man bowed down his Head, and worſhipped the Lord*, Gen. 24. 26. When the Children of *Iſrael* underſtood God's Purpoſe to deliver them out of *Egypt*, then *they bowed down their Heads and worſhipped*, Exod. 4. 31. When God appeared to *Moſes*, and proclaimed his Glory, it is ſaid, *And* Moſes *made haſte and bowed his Head towards the Earth, and worſhipped*, Exod. 34. 8. When *Job* had heard the ſeveral Meſſages that were brought him, concerning God's dealing with him, it is ſaid, *Then* Job *aroſe, rent his Mantle, and ſhaved his Head, and fell down upon the Ground*

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and worſhipped, Job 1. 20. But the Scripture is ſo full of ſuch Expreſſions, that it would be tedious to repeat all the Places where they occur; but I cannot omit that, where it is ſaid, *Ezra bleſſed the Lord, the great God, and all the People anſwered*, Amen, Amen, *with lifting up their Hands, and they bowed down their Heads, and worſhipped the Lord with their Faces to the Ground*, Neh. 8. 6. From whence it is as plain as Words can make it, that this was the ancient way of worſhipping God.

But ſome perhaps may ſay, that theſe Inſtances are only out of the Old Teſtament, and therefore may not concern us now. To which I anſwer, That moſt of them were before the Levitical Law was made, neither was this ever commanded in that Law which was to expire with Chriſt, but is grounded upon the Law of Nature, and inſerted into the Body of the Moral Law, as I obſerved before. Howſoever, to put the Matter out of doubt, we have as pregnant Inſtances of it in the New Teſtament, as in the Old. For the Wiſe Men that came from the Eaſt, when they had found out our Lord, *they fell down and worſhipped him*, Mat. 2. 11. When Satan had ſhewed our Saviour all the Kingdoms of the World, and tempted him, ſaying, *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall*

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down and worſhip me. Our Lord anſwered *Get thee hence Satan, it is written, Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve,* Matt. 4. 9, 10. Where it is manifeſt, that our Saviour by *Worſhip*, means that kind of Worſhip which the Devil would have had performed to him, even by *falling down before him.*

Thus it was that our Lord himſelf was often *worſhipped*, as we read in the Holy Goſpels. For S. *Matthew* ſaith, that a *certain Leper came to him and worſhipped him*, Matt. 8. 2. And how he did it, St. *Mark* acquaints us, ſaying, that *he kneeled down to him*, Mark 1. 40. From whence it appears, that *kneeling down* and *worſhipping*, in the Senſe of the Evangeliſts, is one and the ſame thing. So alſo St. *Matthew* again ſaith, that *Jairus worſhipped* our Lord, Matt. 9. 18. St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* ſay, that *he fell down at Jeſus Feet*, Mark 5. 22. Luke 8. 41.

And indeed it was after the ſame manner that Chriſt himſelf worſhipped in the Garden. For St. *Luke* ſaith, that *he kneeled down and prayed*, Luke 24. 41. St. *Matthew*, that *he fell on his Face*, Matt. 26. 39. St. *Mark*, that *he fell on the Ground and prayed*, Mark 14. 35. Which ſhews that he uſed all theſe ſeveral Poſtures in the worſhipping of his Father. Nay, it is much to be obſerved,

that the laſt Act that our Saviour did before his Death upon the Croſs, was an Act of Worſhip in this Senſe. For St. *John* ſaith, that *he bowed down his Head and gave up the Ghoſt*, John 19. 30. And ſeeing our Bleſſed Lord, both in his Life, and at the very Point of Death *worſhipped* after this manner, it cannot be imagined but that his Apoſtles did ſo too. And therefore we find St. *Paul kneeling* at his Prayers upon the Sea-ſhore, *Act.* 21. 5. And St. *Stephen*, when the Stones were flying about his Ears, *Act.* 7. 60. Which certainly he would not have done at ſuch a time, if it had been a mere Ceremony, and not a neceſſary part of Religious Worſhip.

Hence, when *Cornelius* ſuppoſing St. *Peter* to be more than a Man, *fell down at his Feet to worſhip him.* St. *Peter* took him up, ſaying, *ſtand up, I my ſelf alſo am a Man*, Act. 10. 26. As if he ſhould have ſaid, this is the Worſhip which is due to God, and therefore not to be performed after this manner to me, who am only a Man. So alſo when S. *John*, ſuppoſing the Angel that ſpake to him to be Chriſt himſelf, *fell down at his Feet to worſhip him*, the Angel forbad him, ſaying, *See thou do it not, for I am thy Fellow-Servant, worſhip God*, Apoc. 19. 10. c. 22. 9. *i. e.* worſhip God, and him only after this manner, as thou wouldſt have wor-

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ſhipped me, even by falling down before him.

But we need no other Arguments to prove that this was the Notion which the Apoſtles had of Religious Worſhip, than the Teſtimony of St. *Paul*, which makes it clear and undeniable. For he, ſpeaking of Chriſtian Aſſemblies, and of Praying and Propheſying there in a known Tongue, ſaith, that *if one come among them and hears them propheſying in a known Tongue, the Secrets of his Heart will be made manifeſt, and ſo falling down on his Face, he will worſhip God*, 1 Cor. 14. 24. For how was it poſſible for the Apoſtle to declare his Senſe of *Religious Worſhip* more fully and clearly than he hath done in theſe Words? Which ſo plainly teach us, that he who would worſhip God aright, muſt fall down, or uſe ſome ſuch Reverential Poſture before him.

Having thus diſcovered the Mind of the Holy Ghoſt in Scripture, concerning the way and manner of *Worſhipping God*, I might now proceed to ſhew, that this is not my own private Opinion, nor the judgment of our own, or any other particular Church only; but that it hath been the Senſe of the *Catholick Church*, in all Places and Ages ſince the Apoſtles times, and that her Practice hath always been accordingly. But we need not appeal to

the Practice of the *Church Militant*, having the Example of the *Church Triumphant* it self for it. For in the Visions which Saint *John* had of what is done in Heaven, we read, that *The twenty four Elders fall down before him that sits on the Throne, and Worship him that liveth for ever, and ever*, Apoc. 4. 10. And that all the Angels stood round about the Throne, and *fell before the Throne on their Faces, and Worshipped God*, Chap. 7. 11. And so frequently elsewhere. And if those pure and spotless Creatures, the Spirits of Just Men made Perfect, and the holy Angels themselves, Worship the most High God with so much Reverence and Humility; what cause have we poor Mortals upon Earth to do so? Especially, considering, that we hope e'er long to be admitted into their Society, and to do as they do for ever. And therefore, we had need to imitate them as well as we can beforehand; that so when we come amongst them, we may not think it any new or strange thing, much less Superstition, as some do. For they who go out of this World, with their Minds possessed with an Opinion, that to Bow, or Cringe (as they profanely call it, in derision) before Almighty God, is Superstition, are very unfit to go to Heaven; nay, their very Consciences would not suffer them to go thither, if they might,

for fear of being guilty of Superſtition; if they ſhould conform to the Diſcipline and Orders of the Church that is there Eſtabliſhed. But let them Indulge ſuch fooliſh and profane Conceits, if they pleaſe, and ſee what will be the iſſue of it, at long run. Let us, who hope to go to Heaven, begin to Worſhip God here, as we hope to do it there for ever: even by uſing all ſuch humble and awful Geſtures before him, which may teſtifie our Acknowledgment of his Preſence with us, of his Greatneſs and Soveraignty over us, and of his Goodneſs and Mercy to us.

He that impartially conſiders the Premiſes, ſo plainly laid down in the Holy Scriptures, cannot but from thence conclude, that to the right performance of that Duty which is properly called *the Worſhip of God*; it is neceſſary that we *Bow the Head*, or *Knee*, or *whole Body*, or uſe ſome ſuch *outward ſign and expreſſion of Fear and Reverence before him.* And that as ſuch Geſtures when uſed to a Prince, or Parent upon Earth, are a Sign of that civil Reſpect which is due unto them from their Subjects or Children; ſo the ſame, when done to the Creator of the World, are really Acts of that Religious Worſhip which is due from his Creatures to him.

But, after all, I muſt obſerve unto you, there is one thing ſtill behind, without which, all this will ſignifie nothing. That ye may the better underſtand what this is, I deſire you to call to Mind our Saviour's words, *God is a Spirit, and they that worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth*, Joh. 4. 24. I know theſe words have been produced of late, to prove that no External Worſhip is now required of us, and that ſeveral learned Men have taken off the Argument ſeveral ways. But, I cannot but admire, how it firſt came into any Man's Thoughts to imagine, that our Saviour ſhould here condemn External Worſhip. He ſaith, indeed, that we muſt *worſhip God in the Spirit*; but doth it follow therefore, that we muſt not Worſhip him in the Body too? Did not he himſelf perform External Worſhip unto God? Did not he bow his Head, his Knees; yea, his whole Body before him, when he Prayed to him? Did not his Apoſtles and Diſciples do ſo too, as I have ſhewed before? How then can it be imagined, that he ſhould condemn that which he himſelf practiſed, and taught others alſo to do?

But it is plain, that our Saviour is ſo far from ſpeaking againſt External Worſhip in theſe words, that he only Teacheth us how to perform it aright. *God*, ſaith he, *is a Spirit*,

Spirit, and therefore they that *worſhip him*, muſt not put him off, as the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, of whom he there ſpeaks, were wont to do, with *Bodily worſhip only*, but they muſt *worſhip him in Spirit* too, and by conſequence *in Truth*; that being the only *true Worſhip* which is thus perform'd by the whole Man, by the Body and Spirit both, unto him that made them both. So that this ſeems to be the ſame in effect with that Expreſſion of *David*, *In thy fear will I worſhip towards thy Holy Temple*, Pſal. 5. 7. that is, I will not only bow my Head or Body, directing my ſelf, at the ſame time, towards thy Holy Temple, but I will do it in the fear and dread of thy Divine Majeſty; which alſo is implied in the very notion of Worſhip. For that being only a Sign or Expreſſion of our Senſe and Fear of God; if the Spirit be not at the ſame time poſſeſſed with ſuch a ſenſe and fear of God, there cannot be any real Sign or Expreſſion of it; and therefore no true Worſhip. So that to our worſhipping of God in Truth, it is abſolutely neceſſary, that the ſeveral Motions of our Bodies before him, proceed from, and be attended with ſuitable Motions of the Soul and Spirit towards him.

And thus indeed it was, that Pious and Devout Perſons, have been always wont to

Worſhip God. I could give you many Inſtances of it, both in the *Old* and *New Teſtament*. To paſs by others, I before obſerv'd, how *Job*, underſtanding God's Pleaſure towards him, fell down upon the Ground and worſhipped before him; but did not he worſhip in his Soul as well as Body? Yes, ſurely, for as he lay thus Proſtrate before God, he ſaid, *Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and Naked ſhall I return thither, the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord*, Job. 1. 21. From whence it is plain, that the Proſtration of his Body before God, was attended with an equal Submiſſion of his Spirit to him. Thus our Lord deſcribes two Men going up to the Temple to Pray, the one a *Phariſee*, the other a *Publican*; the *Phariſee*, ſaith he, *ſtood and Prayed thus with himſelf, God I thank thee, that I am not as other Men*, &c. from whence we may obſerve, that he uſed no Reverence at all, but talked proudly and malapertly to Almighty God; and therefore our Saviour doth not ſay, that he Prayed to God but that he Prayed *with himſelf*, or as it is in the *Greek*, πρὸς ἑαυτὸν, he Prayed *to himſelf*; but the *Publican ſtanding afar off*, and ſignifying thereby his Unworthineſs to approach to God, *would not lift up ſo much as his Eyes to Heaven*, but fixing them upon the Earth, which he could not do with-

out bowing down his Head, in this humble worſhipping Poſture, *He ſmote upon his breaſt*, ſaying, *God be merciful to me a ſinner*, Luk. 11. 13. which ſhews, that as his outward Carriage before God, was Humble and Reverent, ſo was his Spirit too. And therefore our Saviour ſaith, that *this Man went to his Houſe Juſtified rather than the other*, that is, this Man's Prayer and Worſhip was accepted, the other's not.

Thus alſo it was, that our Lord himſelf Worſhipped God, in Spirit and in Truth, according to his own words. For at the ſame time that his Body lay Proſtrate before his Father in the Garden, his Soul was ſubmitting it ſelf to him, *Father*, ſaith he, *if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me; Nevertheleſs, not my Will, but thine be done*, Matth. 26. 39. So he did too, when he was upon the Croſs; for St. *John*, as I obſerved, ſaith, *he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghoſt*. And St. *Luke* ſaith, that *he cryed with a loud Voice, ſaying, Father into thy Hands I commend my Spirit, and having ſaid thus, he gave up the Ghoſt*, Luk. 23. 46. From whence it is evident, that at the ſame time that he bowed his Head, he likewiſe commended his Spirit into the Hands of God, and ſo worſhipped him, both in Body and Spirit too.

Thus

Thus alſo it is that the glorified Saints and Angels in Heaven are repreſented to us as worſhipping God there: For as they fall down before him, ſo at the ſame time they cry out, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for thou haſt created all things, and for thy Pleaſure they are and were created*, Apoc. 4. 11. And elſewhere, having declar'd God's Goodneſs to his Church, in delivering Her from Her Enemies, they fell down and worſhipped, ſaying, *Amen, Alleluja*, c. 19. 4. And this certainly is to worſhip God in Spirit and Truth, when the Soul at the ſame time is ſo inflamed with Love unto him, and ſo full of the Senſe of his Goodneſs and Power, that it breaks forth into Praiſes and Allelujahs to him.

Thus laſtly it is, that the Catholick Church upon Earth hath always obſerved this Rule of our Bleſſed Saviour. But I ſhall inſtance only in the *Greek* and *Syriack* Churches. In the Greek, they have their ordinary *Bowings*, which they properly call προσκυνήματα *Worſhippings*; and their Extraordinary, which they call μετανοίας, which are of two Sorts, the *leſſer* and the *greater*; the *leſſer* are, when they bow their Heads only to the Ground; the *greater*, when they lie proſtrate upon it. Now, whenſoever they perform any ſuch Ex-

External Worſhip with their Bodies, their Souls, or Spirits, are likewiſe employed in it. For we find in their Publick Service, that when they make their three Ordinary Bows, they often ſay the τρισάγιον, and bow at each part of it; Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός, Ἅγιος ἰσχυρός, Ἅγιος ἀθάνατος ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, *Holy God, Holy Almighty, Holy Immortal God, have Mercy upon us.* When they come firſt into the Chancel or Choire, and make their three Bows towards the Eaſt, they repeat the Words of the Publican, *God be merciful to me a Sinner.* Afterwards when they Bow, they ſometimes uſe the Words of the Pſalmiſt, *I will love thee, O Lord my Strength, the Lord is my Support, and my Refuge.* Sometimes they ſay, *Lord open thou my Lips, and my Mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy Praiſe.* Sometimes the *Gloria Patri*; which is never ſaid without worſhipping the moſt Bleſſed Trinity, that is glorified in it. And as for the *Syriack* Church, there is a Liturgy uſed in *Syria*, *Chaldæa*, and all the Places there-abouts, which is all in the *Syriack* Tongue, except the Rubricks, which are *Arabick*; in this I find, that the Prieſt, when he goes to the Altar, make shis Bow, and ſaith, *I am come into thy Houſe, O God, and worſhip before thy Throne, O King of Heaven forgive me all*

that

that I have ſinned againſt thee, Litur. Syr. P. 2.

And this, as might be eaſily ſhewn, hath been the conſtant Practice and Cuſtom of the Church in all Ages and Places. So that as Chriſtians durſt never, till our Days, pray to Almighty God, without either kneeling or bowing, or uſing ſome Poſture of Adoration before him, ſo they never uſed any ſuch Poſture, but they ſtill lift up their Hearts and Spirits to him. And this was always reputed the *true worſhipping* of God; or, as our Saviour words it, the *worſhipping of him in Spirit and in Truth*. For as where the Apoſtle ſaith, that he *will ſing with the Spirit, and he will ſing with the Underſtanding alſo*, 1 Cor. 14. 15. and that we ſhould *ſing and make Melody in our Hearts to the Lord*, Eph. 5. 19. He doth not thereby forbid the Uſe of our Voices in ſinging (without which there cannot be properly any ſinging at all,) but only requires, that our Hearts ſhould go along with them. So when our Saviour ſaith that we ſhould *worſhip in the Spirit*; he doth not thereby forbid the uſing of any Bodily Geſtures (without which there cannot be properly any worſhipping at all) but only requires that our Spirits go along with our Bo-

dies

dies in the Performance of it. For as no Man can be ſaid to worſhip God at all, that doth not worſhip him with his Body, ſo no Man can be ſaid to worſhip him in Truth, that doth not worſhip in his Spirit alſo.

Now theſe Things being thus laid down, it is eaſie to determine what the *Greeks* in my Text did, when *they came up to worſhip at the Feaſt*. For we cannot but ſuppoſe they did the Work they came about, that is, they went to the Temple, the Houſe of the moſt High God, and there believing and apprehending him to be, according to his Promiſe, ſpecially preſent, they bowed their Heads, or proſtrated themſelves upon their Knees or Faces before him, and in this humble Poſture they confeſſed their Sins, and implor'd his Mercy in the Pardon of them, and his Grace to forſake them; acknowledging him to be the Almighty Creator and Governour of the World, and that they had nothing but what they received from his Bounty and Goodneſs; or ſomething to that Purpoſe. For this was properly to worſhip God, according to the true Senſe of the Word, as uſed in Scripture, and interpreted by the Practice of the Univerſal Church.

Thus I have endeavour'd to explain the ancient and true Notion of *Religious Worſhip*;

ſhip; which, if ſeriouſly conſider'd, would contribute very much, as to the Advancement of God's Glory, ſo likewiſe to the Settlement of his Church among us; and to the defending of it againſt its Adverſaries on both Sides. For as for the Sectaries, who inveigh ſo much againſt theſe ſolemn Geſtures preſcribed by our Church to be obſerved in the Worſhip of God, they muſt needs be convinced of their Error, when they conſider, that ſuch Geſtures are neceſſary to be obſerved in the worſhipping of God, whether they were ever preſcribed by any Church, or no: and that whenſoever they condemn us for the uſing of them, they do with the ſame Breath condemn the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apoſtles, the Martyrs, the whole Catholick Church, both Militant and Triumphant; yea, and Chriſt himſelf the Head of it, who uſed them as well as we.

And as for the Papiſts, from this Catholick Notion of Religious Worſhip, it is eaſie to obſerve, that they have little or nothing of it among them. Foraſmuch as all their Publick Services being perform'd in a Language the People do not underſtand, whatſoever outward Geſtures they uſe, it is impoſſible they ſhould worſhip God together in Spirit, as they ought to do.

do. And beſides, although they often bow or kneel, it is uſually to ſome Image or Picture, and ſo they worſhip that inſtead of God, directly contrary to his Commandment. I know the Learned among them pretend, that although they bow to Images, they do not intend to worſhip them, but God only: But they may pretend what they pleaſe, I am ſure God himſelf doth not ſpeak one Word of directing their Intentions one way or other, but only of bowing to Images, *Thou ſhalt not bow down thy ſelf to them*; and therefore if they do that, be their Intentions what they will, be ſure they do that which he hath plainly forbidden.

But what doth the Apoſtle ſay, *Thou that abhorreſt Idols, doſt thou commit Sacrilege*, Rom. 2. 22. We who abhor the worſhipping of Images and Idols, ſhall we rob God of the Worſhip that is due to him? God forbid. If Bowing be no Act of Religious Worſhip, why do we blame others for giving it to Images? If it be, why do we not give it to Almighty God? And yet of all the Duties required in our Holy Religion, what is more commonly neglected by ſome, and derided by others, than this is? Which plainly ſhews, that for all the great Talk they make of Religion, it is but Talk; they are not in good earneſt

about

about it, nor have that Senſe of God upon their Mind, which is the Ground and Foundation of it. For if they had, it would be impoſſible for them not to expreſs it all the ways they can, eſpecially this way, which is ſo natural, that they who do not expreſs their Senſe of God by it, have juſt Cauſe to ſuſpect, that they have none at all to expreſs.

For, as for inſtance, we are now in the ſpecial Preſence of that Supreme and All-glorious Being, which we call God, and we ſhall preſently make our ſolemn Addreſſes again to him. Now let any one but conſider who it is before whom he is, and to whom he then ſpeaks, how pure, how holy, how great, how mighty, how infinite he is in all Perfection; and withal, let him by Faith, as it is the Evidence of Things not ſeen, behold and apprehend this Almighty Being, as ſpecially preſent, according to his Word. Let any Man, I ſay, that hath any Fear of God upon his Heart but do this, and then let him forbear to manifeſt it in his outward Behaviour if he can: For my part, I think it to be impoſſible. Eſpecially conſidering, that as God hath promiſed, that where his Name is recorded, he will come unto us and bleſs us: So our Bleſſed Saviour hath ſaid, *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there*

there am I in the midſt of them, Matt. 18. 20. From whence I cannot but believe, that he is as really in the midſt of us at this time, as that we our ſelves are here. But is Chriſt, whom the Angels themſelves worſhip, is he in the midſt of us, and we not worſhip him? Is it poſſible for us firmly to believe, and clearly to apprehend the Eternal God our Saviour to be here preſent, and yet expreſs no Reverence or Reſpect to him, neither when we come into his Preſence, nor when we go out of it, nor while we are in it, and hear his bleſſed Name mentioned to put us in mind of it? No, nor when we take the Boldneſs to ſpeak unto him neither? Surely it cannot be. For ſuch a Faith and Senſe as this, would naturally operate ſo much upon our Minds, that we could not chuſe but fall upon our Knees, or bow down before him, and ſo worſhip him both in Soul and Body too.

This therefore being the moſt ancient, the moſt proper, and as I may truly ſay, the moſt natural way of worſhipping God, who can but wiſh it was revived and univerſally received among us? Of what mighty Advantage would it be, both to our ſelves, to the whole Church, and Kingdom alſo? For by this means we ſhould effectually obtain whatſoever good Things we

thus humbly desire at the Hands of God, as the Fathers have frequently observed. By this means also we should very much excite both our own and each others Affections towards God, when we meet to perform our Devotions to him. For it is S. *Augustine*'s Observation, that as all such Motions of the Body, whereby we worship God, proceed from the inward Affections of our Souls to him, so those inward Affections themselves are increased by such Motions. (*Aug. de curâ pro mort. c.* 5.) And none of us but may observe the same from our own Experience, that the more humble and devout we are in worshipping God, the more are our own Affections raised, and our Souls inflamed towards him. How much more, when we see all about us, testifying their Acknowledgment of God's Greatness, Power and Sovereignty over them, in the same reverent and solemn manner that we our selves do it?

Moreover this would be the most effectual way whereby to lay that Spirit of Schism and Sedition, of Profaneness and Irreligion which is gone out among us. For by this means God himself would delight to dwell amongst us, and then that wicked, that turbulent, and seditious Spirit would soon flee from us? And by this Means also Mens Minds would be so over-

aw'd with the Fear of God, and fortified with such strong and lively Apprehensions of him, that they could never be prevailed upon, either to leave or divide that Church, wherein they are taught and required to worship God so purely and devoutly as they are in ours.

Neither would this conduce only to the Peace and Quiet of the Church, but of the Kingdom too. For this would keep up a Sense of Religion among us: And then as Men would fear God, they would honour the Queen too. But so long as People express no Reverence to the God of Heaven, how can it be expected they should shew any to their Superiors upon Earth? And therefore it is very observable, that one of the first Steps the Devil made, in order to the disposing Mens Minds for the late horrid Rebellion, was, to take them off from bowing, or kneeling, or using any external Reverence in their Prayers to God, as well knowing, that when that was once done, they would soon cast off all Sense of their Duty and Allegiance to the King; as we afterwards found they did by woful Experience. Whereas they who constantly worship God aright, according to the Rules and Orders of our Church, by their frequent and humble Addresses to him, have their Minds continually possessed with such an

Awe and Dread of his Greatneſs and Power, that they dare not for their Lives oppoſe it in thoſe to whom he hath committed any part of it, and ſo hath made them his Vicegerents upon Earth.

But I muſt remember that we come not hither only to hear, but to do what we have now heard, that is, to worſhip God, and that we are to do it now at his Holy Table: Wherefore that I may detain you no longer from it, I ſhall ſay no more, but only add, that could we be all perſuaded conſtantly to perform this great Duty, with that Humility and Submiſſion, both of Mind and Body that we ought, as we ſhould always live in the true Fear of God, while we are upon Earth. So we ſhould be always ready and prepared to go to Heaven, where we hope to do that to all Eternity, which we have now been ſpeaking of, even worſhip and adore the Almighty Creator of the World, in and through his Son our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Honour and Worſhip given of us, and of all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth, from this time forth for evermore. *Amen.*

SER-

SERMON VI.

2 Tim. i. 13.

Hold fast the Form of ſound Words which thou haſt heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Chriſt Jeſus.

ALthough we are apt to wonder moſt at ſuch things as ſeldom happen in the World, yet certainly the moſt common and obvious things that be, if duly conſider'd, deſerve as much, if not much more, to be admired by us. What more common to all Mankind, and yet what more ſtrange and wonderful, than that by certain Sounds in the Air, or by certain Characters upon ſolid Bodies, we ſhould be able to diſcover what one another thinks. Thoughts we know are the immanent Acts of the Soul, a Spiritual Being, and ſo not capable of any external Repreſentations. And yet for all that, we can make ſuch Sounds and Figures,

gures, utter ſuch Words, and write ſuch Letters, from whence other Perſons may underſtand what we think as well as we our ſelves. And this indeed is the Foundation of all humane Society and Converſation. For by this means we can communicate our Hopes and Fears, our Joys and Griefs, our Deſires and Abhorrences, all our Sentiments and Notions to one another. Yea, by this means we can converſe with the Antients, and know what they thought, that lived above a Thouſand years ago. Of ſo great uſe are words, whether ſpoken or written, to Mankind.

And yet as nothing may be more eaſily, ſo nothing hath been more groſly abuſed then they. For though we can frame Ideas and Notions of things in our Minds, without any relation unto or dependance upon Words, yet having been all along accuſtomed to expreſs our Thoughts by them, we are apt to be more intent upon Words, than we are upon Things themſelves; and ſo to accommodate and ſuit our Notions to Words, rather than Words unto our Notions. So that whatſoever Words we commonly uſe, whereby to expreſs ſuch or ſuch Things, our Apprehenſions of theſe things are according to the Words whereby we are wont to expreſs them.

them. If they be falſe, our Apprehenſions being regulated by them, cannot poſſibly be true: and if they be true and rightly underſtood by us, our Apprehenſions cannot poſſibly be falſe; being bound up, as it were, and confined within the Senſe and Meaning of ſuch Words. But it being very hard and difficult to find out fit and proper Words in any Language, whereby fully and diſtinctly to expreſs the Nature of Things, and our own Idea's of them, moſt Men to ſave themſelves the labour of a further Search, take up with the firſt they meet with, eſpecially if they be but generally receiv'd; which if they happen to be falſe, as they frequently are, they infallibly lead them into falſe Conceptions, and erroneous Opinions of the things themſelves. And therefore it cannot but highly concern us all, to be very cautious and wary in the Choice of our Words, eſpecially in Divinity, where every Miſtake is Dangerous, and many Damnable.

This therefore being a Matter of ſo great importance, much greater than it is commonly thought of, it may juſtly challenge to be the Subject of our preſent Diſcourſe. For which end I have choſen theſe words of St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, *Hold faſt the Form of ſound Words which thou*

haſt heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Chriſt Jeſus.

Where we may obſerve Three Things:

Firſt, That ſome time before the Writing of this Epiſtle, St. *Paul* had given to *Timothy* a form of ſound Words, though not in Writing, yet by word of Mouth. This is plain, in that he ſaith, *A Form of ſound Words, which thou haſt heard of me.* *Timothy* was now Ordained Biſhop of *Epheſus*, the Metropolis of all *Aſia Proconſularis*, whither the Apoſtle ſent him to preach and propagate the Goſpel; and that he might rightly underſtand the Principles of that Religion, which he was to preach, and cauſe others to do ſo too, the Apoſtle put words into his Mouth, ſuch as would clearly and properly expreſs the great Truths, which he was moſtly to inſiſt upon, which he therefore calls ὑγιαινόντας λόγους, ſound Words, ſuch as would make his Hearers to be *Sanæ mentis*, Men of ſound Judgment and right Notions in the Myſteries of Religion. And whoſoever doth not conſent to thoſe ſound and wholeſome Words, the ſame Apoſtle elſewhere ſaith, *That ſuch a one is a Fool, knowing nothing*, ἀλλὰ νοσῶν, but he is ſick, as the word ſignifies, or as our Tranſlation hath

hath it, *he dotes about Questions and ſtrifes of Words*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. As if a Malignant Fever had affected his Brain, diſtracted his Mind, and made him delirious, ſo as to rave and talk Nonſenſe. For ſo all do that uſe any other than right and proper Words in the Myſteries of our Religion, whatſoever they ſay is Nonſenſe, if not downright Blaſphemy. Hence it is that the Apoſtle ſo often makes mention of ſound Doctrine, in oppoſition to the extravagant and corrupt Opinions, which falſe Teachers, even in thoſe Days, inſtilled into the Minds of their Ignorant and unwary Diſciples. And leſt *Timothy*, thro' any miſtake or inadvertency, ſhould fall himſelf, or lead others into the ſame Errors, St. *Paul*, before he ſent him to preach the Goſpel, furniſhed him with ſuch a Form of ſound Words, which if he did but conſtantly obſerve, he could neither be deceived nor deceive.

Secondly, We may obſerve that this Form of ſound Words was both in *Faith and Love, which is in Chriſt Jeſus*: that is both concerning the Doctrine and the Diſcipline, what we are to believe, and what to do, in Obedience to the Goſpel of Chriſt. For as Faith comprehends the one, ſo doth Love the other. And St. *Paul* had given *Timothy* a Form of ſound

Words

Words in both. But, firſt in Faith, and then in Love; becauſe it is Faith that works by Love; and he that doth not rightly believe, can never truly obey the Goſpel of Chriſt as he ought to do. But in one, as well as the other, St. *Paul* inſtructed *Timothy* how to expreſs himſelf, and by what means hath admoniſhed us alſo to be very careful how to ſpeak, what words we uſe, whether in Theoretical or Practical Divinity, concerning either Faith or Manners.

Laſtly, St. *Paul* did not think it enough, to give *Timothy* a Form of ſound words, but he chargeth him to hold it faſt, to keep it, to uſe no other words, but ſuch as exactly agreed with thoſe which he had taught him. The *Greek* words are ὑποτύπωσιν ἔχε τῶν ὑγιαινόντων λόγων, where the word ὑποτύπωσις is variouſly rendred by Interpreters. I ſhall not trouble you with any critical Obſervations about it. But only obſerve in general, that it is ſometimes uſed for a Pattern or Example, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. ſometimes for a ſhort Deſcription, or Delineation, or Summary, or Compendium. Thus *Clemens Alexandrinus* wrote a Book, which he called, ὑποτυπώσεις, which *Photius* ſaith, was a brief Expoſition of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*; out of which the Ἐπιλογαὶ ἐκ τῶν Θεοδότου at the end of his works,

works, I ſuppoſe were taken. And in this Senſe, the word here uſed, intimates, as if St. *Paul* had given *Timothy*, if not that which we call the Apoſtles *Creed*, yet ſome ſuch like Form of ſound Words, containing the Sum and Subſtance of what he was to Believe and Preach.

But the Apoſtle lays no great ſtreſs upon that word. For it follows, hold faſt the Form of ſound words, ὧν παρ' ἐμοῦ ἤκουσας, ὧν not ἧς, which Words, not which Form thou haſt heard of me. So that it is not ſo much the Form, as the Words themſelves, which the Apoſtle would have him to hold faſt, to have them continually in his Mind, and in his Mouth too, whenſoever he ſpeaks of thoſe Divine Truths, which are revealed to us in the Goſpel.

What theſe ſound Words were which *Timothy* heard of St. *Paul*, we know not: But this we know, that it doth as much concern us to uſe ſound words in matters of Divinity, as it did him. And therefore having not heard them at St. *Paul's* own Mouth, as he did, it may not be amiſs, if we conſider of the moſt certain way to find them out, that we may conſider how to expreſs our ſelves in all the Articles of our Chriſtian Faith, by ſuch words as the Apoſtle here calls ſound and wholſome, ſuch as will give us and thoſe we ſpeak to, occaſion to frame

right

right Notions and Conception of those things which belong to our Everlasting Peace.

For this End therefore, I shall in the first place lay down this as a most certain and undeniable Truth, that the Scriptures, as being indited by the Spirit of God, in the Languages wherein they were first written, do contain the best and soundest Words that possibly could be Invented, whereby to express such Truths, which is is necessary for Mankind to believe or know. For they being design'd on purpose to be the Rule, both of our Faith and Manners, and contriv'd for that end, by infinite Wisdom and Goodness it self; it cannot be imagined, but that every thing is there express'd, in the most plain and perspicuous, the most fit and proper, the most full and significant Words, that could be desired of Almighty God, whereby to discover Himself and his Will to our capacities: To which of his infinite Mercy, he is pleased to condescend, in all these Books which are acknowledged by all Christians to be written by Men inspired, moved, assisted and directed in what they wrote, by the Spirit of God himself. By which means, the whole Scripture is indeed, but as one continued *Form of sound Words*; which if we do but *Hold fast* and understand

aright

aright, we can neither fall, either into *Hereſie* or *Schiſm*. And whatſoever words we uſe in the Myſteries of our Religion, are either true or falſe, ſound or corrupt, as they do, or do not agree with thoſe which are uſed in that Holy Writ.

But in the next place, we muſt conſider withal, that notwithſtanding the extraordinary clearneſs and propriety of Speech, whereby Divine Truths are there revealed to us, yet there never was any *Error*, *Hereſie* or *Schiſm* in the Church, but what was pretended by the Authors and Abettors of it, to be grounded upon Scripture. In this, all Heretick, *Greek* and *Latin*, Old and New agree. They all plead Scripture for what they ſay; and each one pretends that his Opinion, be it never ſo abſurd and ridiculous, is conſonant to the words there uſed. Which though it may ſeem ſtrange at firſt ſight; we ſhall not much wonder at, if we do but conſider three things.

Firſt, that moſt Men, not underſtanding the Original Languages, read and conſult the Scriptures no otherwiſe than in ſome Tranſlation, which they notwithſtanding, look upon as the Word of God; and if there be any word in that Tanſlation, that favours any Erroneous Opinion, they preſently conclude, that the Scriptures

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do ſo too, tho' they be as much againſt it, as that Tranſlation is for it. As for Example, in the firſt Promulgation of the Goſpel to Mankind; God ſaid to the Serpent that beguiled our firſt Parents, *And I will enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy ſeed and her ſeed,* הוּא יְשׁוּפְךָ רֹאשׁ, It, that is *the Seed of the Woman*, which is Chriſt, *ſhall bruiſe thy Head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his Heel*; as our Tranſlation rightly expounds it. But the vulgar *Latin* renders it, *Ipſa conteret caput tuum*, as if a Woman ſhould do it; which the *Papiſts* interpreting of the *Virgin Mary*, aſcribe to her this great Victory, and Triumph over Sin and Satan; and are taught to ſay in their Addreſſes to her, *Adoro & benedico ſanctiſſimos pedes tuos, quibus antiqui ſerpentis caput calcaſti.* There are many other abſurd Opinions as well as Practices in that Church, which this one word hath been the Occaſion of it.

Thus, where the Apoſtle ſpeaking of Marriage, ſaith, τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα μυέστιν, the vulgar *Latin* again tranſlates it, *Sacramentum hoc magnum eſt.* From whence they conclude Matrimony to be a Sacrament, ſuch a one as Baptiſm, and the Lord's Supper.

Thus, alſo immediately before his Aſcenſion, our Bleſſed Lord ſaid to his Apoſtles,

ſtles, Πορευθέντες ὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτὺς, which the vulgar *Latin* renders, *Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos.* Which moſt of our Modern *European* Verſions follow. And from hence I verily believe the Error of the Anabaptiſts, and Antipedobaptiſts took its firſt Riſe. For apprehending our Saviour to ſay according to this Tranſlation, *Go ye and teach all Nations, and then baptize them*: They preſently inferr'd, that Perſons ought firſt to be taught, and then baptized: And by Conſequence, that Children being not capable of the former, cannot be ſo of the latter. But if they had underſtood and conſulted the Original, they would have found no ſuch thing. For μαθητέυω never ſignifies to Teach, but only to make a Diſciple. And ſo the *Syriack* and other Oriental Tranſlations conſtantly render the Word. And therefore it is obſervable, that in all the Eaſtern Churches, this Hereſie was never heard of, nor any where elſe, but only in ſuch places where the Vulgar *Latin* prevail'd; which plainly ſhews that it was grounded at firſt, only upon that falſe Tranſlation of the Word μαθητέυσατε, by *Docete*. Tho' afterwards they endeavour'd to prove it from other places of Scripture, either tranſlated, or at leaſt falſly underſtood, as this

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is. Many Instances of this Nature might be produced to shew how false Translations of the Scriptures have given the first Occasion to draw such Opinions from them, which are directly contrary to what is asserted in them. And when Men have once espoused an Opinion, whether it be true or false, they look upon themselves as obliged to maintain it.

Secondly, Although there be many, especially of late Years, who are able to read and understand much of the Original Text, yet they also are to seek for the true meaning of many Places. For besides the ἅπαξ λεγόμενα, many other Words and Phrases frequently occurr, which cannot be fully understood, except we first know the Rites and Customs of the Jewish Church, consider the Context and Scope of the places where such Words are used, compare one place with another, and observe many other Rules requisite to the right Interpretation of those Holy Oracles: which most Men, by reason of their Ignorance and Sloth, are either unable, or unwilling to do. And therefore are apt to take up with the first Sense that offers itself, without giving themselves the trouble of a farther Search.

Thus *Clemens Alexandrinus* observes of the Hereticks in his Days, that they would quote

quote Scripture indeed, but not in the Senſe which the Context required, but would take here and there a Word, and apply it to their own private Opinions, not conſidering what is ſignified by it, ἀλλ' ἀυτῇ ψιλῇ ἀποχρώμενοι τῇ λέξει, but abuſing the naked Word itſelf, by putting what Senſe they pleaſe upon it. The ſame may be obſerved of many in our Days, who getting a Scripture Word by the end, away they run with it, and never leave it, till they have forced ſome Erroneous Opinion or other from it; which therefore cannot be imputed to any Obſcurity or Uncertainty in the Scriptures themſelves, but to the Darkneſs of Mens Minds, and the Perverſeneſs of their Wills, that they either cannot, or will not take the pains to underſtand what is clearly revealed in them. And to this Head moſt of the Ancient and Modern Hereſies may be referred.

Laſtly, Although ſome do underſtand the Words whereby it hath pleaſed Almighty God to reveal himſelf and his Pleaſure to us; yet the Things themſelves ſignified by thoſe Words, are many of them ſo High, Myſterious and Divine, that their finite and corrupt Apprehenſions are not able to reach them. And therefore diſdaining to believe what they

not comprehend, they detort thoſe Words from their True and proper, to ſuch a Senſe as will ſuit with their Underſtandings. Seeing they cannot apprehend ſo much as the Words ſignifie, they will make the Words ſignifie no more than they can apprehend.

This St. *Peter* obſerved in his Days; where ſpeaking of St. *Paul*, he ſaith, *As alſo in all his Epiſtles, ſpeaking in them of thoſe things, in which are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable wreſt, as they do alſo the other Scriptures, to their own Deſtruction*, 2 Pet. 3. 16. Where he plainly ſpeaks, not of the Words, but Things themſelves; for it is not ἐν αἷς, in which Epiſtles, but ἐν οἷς; amongſt which things in thoſe Epiſtles, there are δυσνοητά τινα, ſome things hard to be underſtood.

Such are thoſe great Myſteries of the moſt Bleſſed Trinity, the Divinity, and Incarnation of the Son of God, and the like; which are as plainly revealed in Scripture, as things of that Nature could be; and yet many have had the Impudence to deny them, only upon that Account; becauſe their Reaſons forſooth were not able to comprehend them. Theſe are they who Lucifer-like aſpire to be like God himſelf, *who would meaſure the*

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Water in the hollow of their Hands, and meet out the Heavens with a Span, who would comprehend the Duſt of the Earth in a Meaſure, weigh the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance. Nay, which is worſe, they would meaſure Heaven by Earth; Eternity by Time, God by themſelves; and believe nothing of his Infinite, Eternal, Incomprehenſible Eſſence, but what they can comprehend within the narrow compaſs of their own Reaſon, altho' God himſelf hath been pleaſed to affirm it. As if the Teſtimony of God was not a ſtronger Ground whereupon to build our moſt holy Faith, than Humane Reaſon? Which certainly hath nothing elſe to do in ſuch Myſteries; but to ſearch into the Truth of the Divine Revelation, which being either ſuppoſed or proved, we have all the Reaſon in the World to believe what is ſo revealed, whether we underſtand it or no. But theſe great Maſters of Reaſon, have ſo little of that which they ſo much pretend to, as not to believe this. And therefore to make the Scriptures to ſpeak nothing but what they can comprehend, that is, nothing but what themſelves pleaſe, they wrack every Word, Particle, and Sentence, tranſpoſe the Comma's, alter the Accents, violate all the Rules of true Conſtruction, and then it is no won-

der, if they force the Scriptures to say, not what God, but what themſelves would have them. And by this means it is, that the moſt pernicious and blaſphemous of all Hereſies were firſt broached, which whoſoever ſwallow down are certain to be poiſoned and undone for ever.

Hence therefore we may obſerve, how that although the Scriptures contain none but ſound and wholſome Words, ſuch as *Timothy* heard of St. *Paul*; yet ſuch is the Weakneſs of Men's Underſtandings, ſuch the Corruption of their Judgments, ſuch the Perverſeneſs of their Wills, the Diſorder of their Affections, and the Pravity of their whole Souls, that they extract Poiſon from that which was intended for their Food, draw Error out of Truth, Hereſie out of the Scriptures themſelves, ſo as to learn to blaſpheme God in his own Words. But what then ſhall we do in this Caſe? How can we be ever certain that the Words we uſe in Matters of Religion be ſound, and by conſequence our Opinions orthodox, and our Sentiments of God and thoſe eternal Truths which he hath revealed to us, ſuch as he himſelf would have them? Why ſurely for this End it is neceſſary, that we indulge not our own Fancies, nor idolize our own private Opinions, but *hold faſt the Form of ſound Words* delivered to us

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in the Holy Scriptures, in that Senſe which the Catholick Church in all Ages hath put upon them.

For the eternal Son of God having with his own Blood, purchaſed to himſelf an Univerſal Church, we cannot doubt but that he takes ſuch Care of it, that, according to his Promiſe, *the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt it*. For which end, He, the Head of this Myſtical Body, doth not only defend and protect it by his Almighty Power, but he ſo acts, guides, directs and governs it by his Holy Spirit, that though Errors and Hereſies may ſometimes diſeaſe and trouble ſome parts of it, yet they can never infect the whole; but that is ſtill kept ſound and entire, notwithſtanding all the Power and Malice of Men or Devils againſt it. So that, if we conſider the Univerſal Church or Congregation of faithful People, as in all Ages diſperſed over the whole World; we may eaſily conclude, that the greateſt Part, from which the whole muſt be denominated, was always in the right, which the ancient Fathers were ſo fully perſwaded of, that although the Καθολικὸς properly ſignifies Univerſal, yet they commonly uſed it in the ſame Senſe as we do the Word *Orthodox* as oppoſed to an Heretick, calling an *Orthodox* Man a Catholick, that is, a Son of the Ca-

Catholick Church: As taking it for granted, that they, and only they, which constantly adhere to the Doctrine of the Catholick or Universal Church, are truly Orthodox; which they could not do, unless they had believed the Catholick Church to be so. And besides that, it is part of our very Creed, that the Catholick Church is Holy, which she could not be, except free from Heresy, as directly opposite to true Holiness.

He therefore that would be sure not to fall into damnable Errors, must be sure also to continue firm and stedfast, to the Doctrine of the Universal Church, as being grounded upon the Scriptures rightly understood: For so every thing is, that she hath taught us. For the Catholick Church never undertook as the Romish hath done, to coin any new Doctrines of her own Head. No, She always took the Scriptures for the only Standard of Truth; and hath accordingly delivered her Sense of them, in such Words as she judged to agree exactly with those which are there used.

And therefore it is observable, that the Church never undertook publickly to determine any Truth, until it was first denyed, nor to interpret the Scriptures, until they were first perverted. If no Hereticks had ever risen up in the Church, the Church had

had never held any general Councils. And if the Scripture Words and Phraſes had not been firſt abuſed, and wreſted to a wrong and contrary Senſe to what they were intended, ſhe had never invented other Words to explain them. But when the Enemy had ſown Tares in the Lord's Field, the Church could not but endeavour to root them out, or at leaſt to keep them from ſpreading any further. When wicked Men had offered Violence to the Word of God, his Spouſe could do no leſs than defend it, and declare the true Senſe and Meaning of it to her Children.

As for Example, that great Fundamental Article of our Chriſtian Faith, upon which, not only our Religion, but our eternal Salvation depends; the Divinity of our Bleſſed Saviour, is ſo plainly, ſo fully, ſo frequently aſſerted in holy Writ, that the Church did for many Years together believe, acknowledge and preach it, only in Scripture Words, and needed not as yet any other Words, whereby to expreſs it. But when it was once denyed, and the Scripture Words ſo far abuſed, as that a quite contrary Senſe was extorted from them, then it was time for the Catholick Church to appear in its Behalf: And being accordingly aſſembled in a general Council at *Nice*, She there determined that the

Son is ὁμοούσιος τῷ πατρὶ, of the ſame Subſtance or Eſſence with the Father: Which Words ſhe then uſed only for the clearer Explication of the ſeveral Places in Scripture, where the Divinity of Chriſt is aſſerted. For *Athanaſius*, who was preſent at the Council, ſaith, that the Fathers gathering the Senſe of the Scriptures concerning our Saviour, εἰρήκασι τὸ ὁμοούσιον, pronounced him to be ὁμοούσιος. And therefore, though the Word was not in Scripture, they intended no more by it, than what was there expreſſed in other Words.

I know that the *Arrians* complained that the Word οὐσία was no where to be found in Holy Writ. But though that *Greek* Word be not, yet certainly there is no Word in all the *Greek* Language that more exactly anſwers to the moſt proper Name, of God יהוה than οὐσία doth. And indeed the Word Κύριος, which the Apoſtles uſe, and whereby the *Septuagint* Tranſlate יהוה, is much of the ſame ſignification in its Original; from the old Word Κύρω, the ſame with εἰμὶ and ὑπάρχω. And beſides that, the Council of *Nice* did not invent this Word, but it had been uſed in the Church all along before. For *Athanaſius* ſaith, That ſome Biſhops both of *Rome* and *Alexandria* had uſed it 150 Years before that time. And that *Euſebius Cæſari-*

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ensis himself acknowledged as much, and upon that Account afterwards subscribed to the Council. Who those Ancient Bishops were, we know not, their Works being now lost. But *Tertullian*, who lived about 150 Years before that time, in his Apology, saith, That the Son is called God *ex unitate Substantiæ*, and in his Book against *Praxeas*, that the Three Persons are One God *per Substantiæ unitatem*, which perfectly agrees with the *Greek* Word ὁμοούσιος. And seeing they that lived so very near to the Apostles used this Word, it is more than probable that they also were not the first Inventers of it, but that they had received it from the Apostles themselves.

Howsoever, this is certain, that in the Writings both of the Apostles and Prophets, we frequently meet with the Truth it self, which is signify'd by this Word, which having been confirmed by the Council of *Nice*, it hath been constantly used by the Universal Church as the true and full Interpretation of the Holy Scripture concerning the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour; And so generally received by all Christians of all Ages, that after the *Arrians* were once silenced, it never met with any considerable Opponents in the World, but *Mahomet* and *Socinus* with

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their Followers, which deſerve not the Name of Chriſtians.

The ſame may be obſerved of the Third general Council held at *Epheſus*: For when *Neſtorius* had affirm'd, that in Chriſt, as there are two Natures, ſo there are two Perſons likewiſe, one Perſon as he was God begotten of the Father,; the other as Man, born of his Mother, and therefore that the Bleſſed Virgin could not properly be called Θεοτόκος. The Council, for the Determination of this Queſtion, did not only conſult the ſeveral Texts in Scripture relating to our bleſſed Saviour, but conſidered likewiſe in what Senſe thoſe places had been underſtood by the Catholick Church before that time; for which end they cauſed *Nicene* Creed, and ſeveral Paſſages out of St. *Cyprian*, St. *Baſil*, *Athanaſius*, *Gregory*, *Nazianzen*, and many others to be read in Council. And from thence they gathered, and therefore pronounced, that according to the Scriptures, as interpreted by the Catholick Church, Chriſt though he have two Natures, yet he is but One Perſon, and by conſequence that the Virgin *Mary* might properly be called Θεοτόκος, becauſe the ſame Perſon who was born of her, is truly God as well as Man, which being once determined by an univerſal Council to be

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the true ſenſe and meaning of the Scriptures in this Point, hath been acknowledged by the univerſal Church ever ſince, till this time.

I might inſtance in other general Councils, wherein the ſame way and method of proceeding was religiouſly obſerved. For they never took upon them to force new Articles of Faith, but only to explain and eſtabliſh the old Ones; which being delivered in Scripture, were believed all along by the Catholick Church before that time. And certainly whatſoever hath been thus approved by general Councils, and received and taught by the univerſal Church in all Ages, we have all the reaſon in the World to believe it to be the true Doctrine of the Goſpel, every way correſponding with what is delivered in the Scriptures, though it be not *totidem verbis* contained in them. Be ſure no ſober Man, but muſt acknowledge, it is more poſſible for himſelf, yea, and for any particular Church to Err, than it is for the univerſal Church to do ſo. And therefore it muſt needs be the ſafeſt way to uſe Scripture Words in ſuch a Senſe which the univerſal Church hath always put upon them, and by conſequence ſuch Words alſo, whereby the univerſal Church hath always expreſſed her Senſe of God's

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Mind as revealed to us in Scripture, and to look upon them all as found Words, such as St. *Paul* here speaks of, such as will convey right and sound Notions of the Divine Mysteries to our Understandings.

I have insisted the longer upon this, both because it is so necessary to our being sound in the Faith, and also because of the great use that may be made of it in defending our Church against its Adversaries on all sides. For our Church, as to its Doctrine as well as Discipline, is settled upon so firm a Basis, so truly Catholick, that none can oppose what she Teacheth, without denying not only the Scriptures, but the Scriptures as Interpreted by the universal Church. So that we may justly Challenge all the World to shew us any one Point or Article of Faith, wherein our Church differs from the Catholick in all Ages, since the Apostles Days. Which I think is more than can be said of any other National Church in the whole World. There being no other, that I know of, that keeps to the Form of sound Words delivered in Scripture as interpreted by the universal Church so firmly and constantly as ours doth.

Not to trouble you at present with any other. There is the Church of *Rome* that

pretends herſelf to be the only Catholick Church in the World, Examine but the words that ſhe hath taken up of late, the great Words whereby ſhe diſtinguiſheth herſelf from all other Churches, and you will find that they agree neither with Scripture nor Antiquity, much leſs with both, as all ſound Words do. What thoſe Words are which ſhe inſiſts ſo much upon, is eaſy to be found out, for we have a Form of them preſcribed and publiſhed by Pope *Pius* IV. in the Acts of the Council of *Trent*, and inſerted into their Canon Law; a Form of Words that every one is bound to Swear to, before he can be admitted into any Degree in their Univerſities, into any Benefice, Dignity or Preferment in their Church, or indeed into any publick Employment whatſoever. As appears by the Bull of the ſaid Pope to that purpoſe. But in this whole Form of words, except the *Nicene* Creed, with which it begins, to make the reſt go down the better, there is ſcarce any one Word which can properly be called ſound, in the Senſe that I have now explained. There is *Tranſubſtantio*, *Purgatorium*, and ſeveral ſuch Novel words, which many of the Papiſts themſelves have acknowledged can never be proved from Scripture. And if ſo, I am ſure they are not conſonant to

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the Doctrine of the universal Church. For she never proposed any thing as necessary to be believed, but what she could prove from Scripture.

It is not worth our Labour to run over the whole Form. But give me leave to single out one Paragraph, because of its relation to the Conspiracy which was yesterday prevented, and we prais'd God for our Deliverance from it. The Words are these, *Sanctam Catholicam & Apostolicam Romanam Ecclesiam, omnium Ecclesiarum matrem & magistram agnosco: Romanoque Pontifici, Sancti Petri Apostolorum principis Successori, ac Jesu Christi vicario, veram obedientiam spondeo ac juro.* An excellent Form of Words truly, for a Man to swear to, directly contrary both to the Scriptures and the Catholick Church. The Church of *Rome*, as now established, a Catholick and Apostolick Church? The Mother and the Mistress of all other Churches? But that is nothing in comparison of what follows; The Bishop of *Rome*, Successor to St *Peter*, and the Vicar of Christ.

And if you would know in what Sense he is the Vicar of Christ, their Authors commonly tell you, that he is so *Christ's Vicar* upon Earth, that Christ and he are but one and the same Head of the Church,

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and so every Creature is as much bound to be subject to the Pope, as to Christ himself. And therefore *Antonius Puccius* in a Speech he made in the Lateran Council to Pope *Leo* X. there present; was neither afraid, nor asham'd to use these Words to him, *Quasi in te, uno, vero, & legitimo Christi & Dei vicario, propheticum illud debuerit rursus impleri; Adorabant eum omnes reges terræ omnes gentes servient ei.* So horribly hath this one Word or Title given to the Pope been abused by them. It hath indeed been the Occasion, not only of their Pride and Ambition, but likewise of all the Villanies, Persecutions and Assassinations that have been executed or attempted by them. For the constant Use of this Word having imprinted in their Minds a Fancy, that the Bishop of *Rome* sits there in Christ's stead, to manage and order the Affairs of the whole World, whatsoever he commands, be it never so wicked and impious, never so cruel and barbarous, they look upon it as sacred, and reckon themselves obliged to obey it, as much, yea much more than what Christ himself hath commanded.

But, if after all you ask them what right he hath to this Name, how he comes to be Christ's Vicar upon Earth, more than any other Bishop? Their Answer is, because

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he is St. *Peter*'s Succeſſor. And therefore to make out this Title, it is neceſſary for them to prove two Things: *Firſt*, That *St. Peter* himſelf was made Chriſt's Vicar more than any other Apoſtle; and then, that the Biſhop of *Rome* ſucceeds him in that Office. As for the firſt, they quote thoſe Words of our Lord to *Peter*, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church*, Matt. 16. But it is plain, that the Catholick Church never underſtood thoſe Words in any ſuch Senſe, as if *Peter* was by them conſtituted the Vicar of Chriſt. And beſides, it is plain alſo, that although we ſhould underſtand the Words of *St. Peter's* Perſon, yet there is nothing at all conferred upon him by them. For our Lord ſpeaks not in the Preſent, but only in the Future Tenſe, and ſo doth not grant him any thing as yet, but only promiſeth to give him ſomething hereafter. *Upon this Rock*, ſaith he, *I will build my Church, and I will give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* And therefore to underſtand theſe Words aright, we muſt conſider when, and how this Promiſe was fulfill'd. And that we ſhall find to have been after the Reſurrection of Chriſt, when he ſaid to his Apoſtles, *As my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you.* And when he had ſaid this, he breathed on them and ſaid, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt, whoſe ſoever*

ſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted to them, and whoſe ſoever ſins ye retain they are retained, Joh. 20. Now was that Promiſe fulfilled: Now were the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven given to St. *Peter*, but not to him only, but to the reſt of the Apoſtles with him; ſo that if St. *Peter* was then made the Vicar of Chriſt, ſo were all the other Apoſtles as well as he. And by conſequence all other Biſhops as well as he of *Rome*.

But after all this, ſuppoſe St. *Peter* was the chief of all the Apoſtles: ſuppoſe our Saviour did deſign him ſome peculiar Honour, by ſaying, *upon this Rock I will build my Church*: What is all this to the *Pope* of *Rome*? How comes he to be ſo much concern'd in any thing that was ſaid, or done to *Peter*. It is no where Recorded in the Goſpel, that our Saviour ever ſo much as mentioned the City of *Rome*, much leſs the Biſhop of that City, which certainly it was very neceſſary he ſhould have done; had he deſigned him for his perpetual Vicar to the end of the World. He that pretends to ſo high an Honour and Dignity as this is, had need have ſomething more to ſhew for it, than the Biſhop of *Rome* hath, who hath ſo little, that it was a Thouſand Years after Chriſt, before this little was

given to him. For as I remember, Saint *Bernard* was the first that ever called him κατ' ἐξοχὴν, the Vicar of Christ. and therefore, it is far from being the Sense of the Catholick Church.

But since this Word hath been used, and this Title hath been given to the Bishop of *Rome*; what Mischief hath it done in the World? For he conceiting himself to represent Christ's Person upon Earth, and to be Invested with all his Power and Authority, at length began to look upon himself as something more than a Man; at least, far above all Mortals upon Earth; and therefore hath taken upon him to depose Kings, to absolve their Subjects from their Allegiance, and to persecute, murder, assassinate all sorts of Persons that he is pleased to call Hereticks. And all this under the pretence of Religion, and Authority derived from Christ himself, as being his Vicar upon Earth.

Oh Blessed Jesu! that ever thy Sacred Name should be thus abused, by the Sons of Men! That ever any one should dare to pretend Power from thee, to destroy those whom thou camest to Save with thine own Blood! What shall we say unto thee, Oh thou Redeemer of Men? We blush and are ashamed of our selves, that ever

ever any of our Nature which thou waſt pleaſed to aſſume, ſhould be ſo injurious to thee? How long, oh Lord, Holy and True; doſt thou not Judge and Avenge thy ſelf on all thoſe who thus continually Blaſpheme thy Great and All-glorious Name, and uſe it to Palliate their moſt Atrocious Crimes, and Barbarous Enormities? Abate their Pride, aſſwage their Malice, and confound their Devices, that thy Name may be no longer diſhonoured, thy Goſpel perverted, nor thy Holy Catholick Church oppreſſed by them!

I have taken the boldneſs to make this ſhort Addreſs to our Lord and Maſter Chriſt, as being confident, that he, according to his Promiſe, is preſent with us, and will in his good time, grant what we have deſired of him. In the mean while, we muſt learn Obedience, and Submiſſion to his Divine Will; and above all things, take care to keep within the Bounds that he hath ſet us, and to continue ſound Members of that Myſtical Body, whereof he is Head. For which end, we muſt be ſure to obſerve this Apoſtolical Rule, to *hold faſt the Form of ſound Words*; which his Apoſtle judged ſo neceſſary, that he minds *Timothy* of it, not only here, but likewiſe in his former Epiſtle to him, ſaying 1 *Tim.* 6. 20.

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy Charge; that is, the *fides depositum*, as Saint *Heirome* expounds it, *that sound Faith which is committed to thee*; and then he adds, *avoiding* τὰς βεβήλους κενοφωνίας, *profane and vain Bablings*, as contrary to the *sound Words* before spoken of; or, as the *Latin* Fathers generally render it, *Devitaris profanas vocum novitates*: Reading, I suppose Καινοφωνίας, instead of κενοφωνίας: But the Sense is much the same. For all new ways of speaking in Divinity, especially in our Age, is at the best but vain Babling, and commonly profane, possessing Men's Minds with such Notions and Conceptions of things, as will infallibly lead them into *Error* and *Heresie*. Read but the wild extravagant Opinions of the first *Hereticks* and *Schismaticks*, that disturbed the Church; and afterwards take a view of those which after Ages have produc'd; together with such as have been either Reviv'd or Invented in our days, and you will find them all made up of new Words, strange Phrases, and odd Expressions, which please the Ears, and then debauch the Minds of them which hearken to them. We need not go far for Instances; every Sect amongst us, will supply us with too many, insomuch, that they may be all known from one another,

ther, meerly by their Words, and new Modes of ſpeaking; whereby they would ſeem to Interpret, when indeed they Pervert, the Scriptures, and wreſt them to their own Deſtruction.

Hence therefore, it will be our Intereſt and Wiſdom, as it is our Duty, to avoid thoſe new Words and Phraſes, which have been lately ſtarted in the Church, as well as the Opinions which are Couch'd under them; and to look upon them at the beſt, but ſuperfluous and unneceſſary, upon that very account, becauſe they are new. For nothing certainly can be neceſſary to be believed, or ſpoken in our Days, which hath not been ſo all along.

Eſpecially, it concerns us, who are to Inſtruct others in the way of Bliſs, to uſe none but *ſound Words*, ſuch as are conſonant to the Scriptures, as Interpreted by the Catholick Church in all Ages. I ſpeak not this of my ſelf; it is the expreſs Command of our Church, in the Canons ſhe put forth in the Year 1571. where ſhe hath theſe words, *Inprimis verò videbunt concionatores, ne quid unquam doceant pro concione, quod à populo religiosè teneris & credi velint, niſi quod conſentaneum ſit doctrinæ veteris aut novi Teſtamenti, quodque ex illâ ipſâ Doctrinâ Catholici Patres, & Veteres Epiſcopi collegerint.*

So wiſely hath our Church provided againſt Novelties; inſomuch, that had this one Rule been duly obſerv'd as it ought, there would have been no ſuch thing as *Hereſie* or *Schiſm* amongſt us. But we ſhould all have continued firm, both to the Doctrine and Diſcipline of the Univerſal Church. And ſo ſhould have *held faſt the Form of ſound Words*, according the Apoſtles Council in my Text, in the ſenſe I have now Explained it; which therefore, that we may for the future do, I ſhall conclude my preſent Diſcourſe with this brief Exhortation.

Men, Brethren and Fathers.

Give me leave to ſpeak freely to you, of the Church you live in. A Church, not only in its Doctrine and Diſcipline, but in all things elſe exactly conformable to the *Primitive*, the *Apoſtolical*, the *Catholick Church*. For, was that no ſooner Planted by Chriſt, but it was watered by the Blood of Martyrs? So was ours. Did the Primitive Chriſtians ſuffer Martyrdom from *Rome*? So did our firſt Reformers. Hath the Catholick Church been all along peſtered with *Heretricks* and *Schiſmaticks*? So hath ours. Have they endeavour'd in all Ages to Undermine, and ſo to Overthrow her? In this alſo, ours is but too much like unto her. And it is no wonder:

For

For the ſame Reaſon that occaſioned all the Diſturbances and Oppoſitions that the Catholick Church ever met with, ſtill holds good, as to ours too: Even becauſe its Doctrine is ſo pure, its Diſcipline ſo ſevere, its Worſhip ſo ſolemn, and all its Rules and Conſtitutions ſo holy, perfect and divine, that Mankind, being generally debauched in their Principles and Practices, have a natural Averſeneſs from it, if not an Antipathy againſt it. They would willingly go to Heaven, but are loth to be at ſo much Pains for it, as our Church, out of the Word of God, preſcribes. And therefore would fain perſwade themſelves, that many of her Preſcriptions are either ſinful or ſuperfluous; becauſe not ſuiting forſooth with their Humour, Intereſt, or depraved Inclinations. But all their little Objections againſt her, are grounded either upon their Ignorance of what ſhe preſcribes, or elſe upon their Unwillingneſs to perform it. There are very few, either of the Papiſts or Sectaries, that know what our Church is, and therefore all their Zeal againſt it, muſt needs be without Knowledge. And they that have ſome general Notions of it, would never ſet themſelves in good earneſt upon the Obſervance of what ſhe commands; and therefore cannot know what Advantage it would be to them.

Whereas, let any one that hath a due Senſe of Religion, and a real Deſire of Happineſs, let ſuch a one make Tryal of our Church but for one Year; let him conſtantly read the Scriptures, in the Method that ſhe preſcribes; let him conſtantly uſe the Common-Prayer, according to her Directions; let him conſtantly obſerve all her Faſts, and Holy Days; let him receive the Sacrament as often as ſhe is ready to adminiſter it, and perform whatſoever elſe ſhe hath been pleaſed to command; let any Man, I ſay, do this, and then let him be againſt our Church, if he can. I am confident he cannot. But our Miſery is, that none of thoſe who are out of our Church, and but few of thoſe that are in it, will make the Experiment. And that is the Reaſon that thoſe are ſo violent againſt her, and theſe ſo indifferent for her.

But let others do what they pleaſe, and anſwer for themſelves as well as they can another Day. As for you who are here at this time, in the eſpecial Preſence of God, I humbly beſeech and exhort you in the Name *of our Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt*, that as he hath been pleaſed to admit you into ſo holy and pure a Church, ſo you would all endeavour to live up to the Rules and Orders of it, as many here preſent do.

Firſt,

First, Keep close to the Words she uses in her Articles and Common Prayers. By this Means you will have a right Judgment in all things, and *hold fast the Form of sound Words* indeed. By this means you will be secure from Heresie, and entertain no Doctrine but what is Catholick and Orthodox. By this means whatsoever happens, you will still be stedfast in the Faith of Christ, and not suffer your selves to be imposed upon by the Adversaries of our Church on either Side. For if they cannot fasten new Words upon you, it will be impossible for them ever to deceive you.

But then you must remember to conform to the Discipline, as well as to the Doctrine of our Church, not hypocritically, indifferently and partially, but sincerely, constantly, universally, so as to observe and do whatsoever she commands, either in her Liturgy, Canons or Constitutions. By this Means you will live as the Primitive Fathers did, and come short of none of the most eminent Christians that ever lived since the Apostles times. By this you will shame the Adversaries of our Church into a Compliance with her, when they see how far you out-strip them in all true Grace and Virtue. Yea, by this means you will be really Saints on Earth, and glorified Saints

in Heaven. For be but you as pious towards God, as loyal to our Queen, as ſober in your ſelves, as faithful to your Friends, as loving to your Enemies, as charitable to the Poor, as juſt to all, as our Church enjoins you: In a word, be but you as conformable to her, as ſhe is to the Catholick Church in all Things, and my Life, my Eternal Life for yours, you cannot but be happy for evermore. Which God of his infinite Mercy grant we may all be, in and through our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, to whom, &c.

The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Criſt, and the Love of God, and the Fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, &c.

SERM-

SERMON VII.

1 COR. ii. 2.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save JESUS CHRIST, *and Him crucified.*

ST. *Paul* in this and his other Epiſtles often ſtiles himſelf, the Apoſtle and the Servant of Jeſus Chriſt, which is the higheſt Title he could give himſelf: Yea, the higheſt that can be given to any one upon Earth. For Jeſus Chriſt being the greateſt as well as the beſt Maſter in the World; the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, his Service muſt needs be the moſt noble Employment, and the greateſt Honour that any Mortal can have, which S^t *Paul* was ſo ſenſible of, that he delighted, he gloried in it, as he well might, more than all things elſe. And always looking upon himſelf, as ſtanding in this relation to Jeſus Chriſt, he made it his

whole buſineſs, as it was his Duty to ſerve Him, his great Lord and Maſter, all he could, by ſetting forth his Glory and Goodneſs in the Redemption of Mankind. And this he did, *not with Excellency of Speech or of Wiſdom*, as he ſpeaks in the Verſe before my Text, but with that Plainneſs and Simplicity, which became the Goſpel of Chriſt; which leſt any ſhould wonder at, he here gives the *Corinthians* the reaſon of it, even becauſe he determined *not to know* or make known *any thing among them, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and Him crucified.*

This was the Sum and Subſtance of all his Writing, and of all his Preaching. And ſo it ought to be of all theirs, who ſucceed him and the reſt of the Apoſtles in the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, for neceſſity is laid upon us; Yea, *woe unto us if we preach not the Goſpel*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. Unleſs we do that, we do not anſwer the End of our Miniſtry, which was ordained on purpoſe to plant, propagate and keep up the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt upon Earth, that Men may always know Him, by whom they may be ſaved, and without whom they can never ſaved. *For there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we muſt be ſaved.* *Act.* 4. 12. And therefore it is in vain to expect it from any other. *Ariſtotle* can

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never ſave us with all his Philoſophy, nor *Tully* with all his Rhetorick. Nor *Plato* neither with his fine Notions, borrowed from *Moſes*. No, nor *Moſes* himſelf. He muſt lead us through the Wilderneſs, but *Joſhua*, or, as the *Greeks* call him, Jeſu muſt bring us to the Land of *Canaan*. The Law muſt direct our ſteps, the Goſpel only can ſave our Souls. The Goſpel, as it reveals Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour to us, and therefore reveals Him, that we may know Him, and how to be ſaved by Him.

Which kind of Knowledge the Apoſtle preferr'd before all other: And not only before the Knowledge of all other things, but before all other things he knew. *Yea, doubtleſs*, ſaith he, *and I count all things but loſs for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord. Phil.* 3. 8. He having attained to the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt his Lord, he found ſo much Excellency in it, that he reckoned that he ſhould have been a great Loſer, if he ſhould have gained all things elſe, without knowing Him: And therefore thought he could not do any Men a greater kindneſs, than to communicate this moſt excellent Knowledge to them, by preaching Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified. Which he therefore did, notwithſtanding that in thoſe Days alſo, as well as ours, there

were some that were offended, and others that laugh'd at him for it. *We Preach*, saith he, *Christ crucified; to the* Jews *a stumbling Block, and to the* Greeks *foolishness, but to them which are call'd, both* Jews *and* Greeks, *Christ the Power of* GOD, *and the Wisdom of* GOD. 1 *Cor.* 1. 23, 24. They who were called to the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, could not but admire and adore him, as the Power of the Almighty, and the Wisdom of the All-Wise GOD: Tho' other People would either stumble or make a mock at it. But what sort of People they were, we may learn from the same Apostle, saying, the *Preaching of the Cross is to them that perish, foolishness.* 1 Cor. 1. 18. And again, *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the* GOD *of this World hath blinded the Eyes of them who believe not, lest the Light of the Glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of* GOD, *should shine upon them.* 2 Cor. 4. 3. Wherefore such, if there be any such now, who deride the Preaching of the Gospel, or despise the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, have but little reason to value themselves upon it. For my part I would not be in their Case for all this World.

St *Paul*, be sure, when inspir'd by GOD himself, was of another mind. For he *determined not to know any thing*, nor to make

make any thing known among them to whom he preached, *ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and Him crucified.* And having the Example of ſo great an Apoſtle before me, I ſhall by GOD's Aſſiſtance entertain your Devout Meditations at this time, with conſidering only what we ought to know of Jeſus Chriſt, and how much that is to be deſir'd and taught before all other Knowledge.

That there was ſuch a Perſon once upon Earth, who was called Jeſus Chriſt, we all know. But we muſt know withal that He was ſuch a Perſon, that there never was, nor ever can be ſuch another in the World. For He was not only a Man, ſuch as we are, but GOD: Nor GOD only, ſuch as the Father is, but Man too: And both GOD and Man in one and the ſame Perſon. Unleſs we know him to be GOD, we cannot believe him to be Jeſus, the Saviour: Unleſs we know him to be Man, we cannot believe him to be Chriſt the Anointed: And unleſs we know him to be both GOD and Man in One Perſon, we cannot believe in him as the One Mediator between GOD and Men. So that this is the great Foundation of our Chriſtian Faith, upon which all our Hopes and Expectations are grounded: And therefore it is ſo clearly reveal'd in GOD's

Holy Word, that none but ſuch as willfully ſhut their Eyes, or harden their Hearts, can be either ignorant or doubtful of it. And if we know this, and carry it always in our minds, it will give us great light into all things elſe that we ought to know or believe concerning Jeſus Chriſt.

As that, this *Immanuel*, GOD with us, as the Prophet calls him,. *Iſaiah* 7. 14. Or as an Angel calls Him, τὸ ἅγιον, *that Holy Thing*. *Luc.* 1. 35. a Thing made up of GOD and Man together, being conceiv'd and made ſo by the Holy Ghoſt coming upon, and the Power of the Higheſt over-ſhadowing the bleſſed Virgin, He was accordingly born of her, and grew up as Men are wont to do: Living as it were *incognito*, till He was about thirty Years of Age, and then He ſhewed Himſelf openly to the World, and manifeſted forth his Divine Power and Glory, by doing ſuch Works, which none could do, as He did them, but GOD only: That Men might ſee and believe, that although He appear'd among them only as a Man, yet He was at the ſame time the One Almighty GOD. He declared that the End of his being made the Son of Man, and coming as ſuch among them, *was to give his Life a ranſom for many*. *Matt.* 20. 28. He ſpake as never Man ſpake, for His anſwers were all

all Oracles, the Anſwers of GOD. He revealed many great Truths, which had before lain hid, ſuch eſpecially as were neceſſary to the purifying Men's Hearts with a right Faith in GOD. He vindicated the Law which He had publiſh'd upon Mount *Sinai*, from the falſe Gloſſes which the *Jews* had put upon it, declaring the true Meaning and the full Extent of it. He taught Men their whole Duty to GOD, to themſelves, and to one another; and that they muſt give Account to Him at the laſt Day, how they have performed it. He ſhewed them how to do what He taught, by doing it Himſelf: And living in all reſpects as He taught them to live. For He never thought, or ſpake, or did amiſs, but went about continually doing good; ſo that He fulfill'd all Righteouſneſs in the Nature of Man, as much as any Man or *Adam* himſelf in his State of Innocence was capable of doing it. And more too. For His Righteouſneſs was the Righteouſneſs not only of Man, but of GOD, which was more than ever was or could be required of mere Men, and of greater worth than the Righteouſneſs of all the Men in the World, could have been, if they had all continued in a State of abſolute Perfection.

The only begotten Son of GOD, of one Subſtance with the Father, having thus converſed with Men, in their Nature alſo, for ſome Years, until he had finiſh'd all that he thought good to do, while He lived upon Earth, He then ſuffer'd himſelf to be apprehended, arraign'd, condemn'd, and at laſt crucified, as if He had been ſome great Malefactor.

This the Apoſtle here lays great ſtreſs upon, determining with himſelf, *not only to know Jeſus Chriſt, but Him crucified*, which he had great reaſon to mention in particular, becauſe unleſs Jeſus Chriſt had died, and unleſs He had died the accurſed Death of the Croſs, He could not have attained the End of His coming into the World; for He would not have given His Life as a Ranſom for any, ſo as to redeem them from the Curſe which GOD had laid upon all *that continue not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them.* *Deut.* 27. 26. *Galat.* 3. 10. which therefore that He might, while He hung upon the Croſs, He voluntarily and of His own accord, gave up the Ghoſt, and died in that Nature which was united to his Divine Perſon, offering it up as a Sacrifice inſtead of all that are of that Nature, ſo as *to be a Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World.* 1 *John.* 2. 2.

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The Death which He ſuffer'd in the whole Nature of Man, being equivalent to the Death of all Mankind: And of infinitely greater Value and Merit. For if all Mankind had died eternally, their Death could have been no more than the Death of ſo many human and finite Perſons, whereas His was the Death of a Perſon who was Infinite and Divine. And therefore by His dying upon the Croſs, He did not only *redeem us from the Curſe of the Law, being made a Curſe for us*, *Gal.* 3. 13. but he merited alſo for us the Grace and Favour of GOD, and all the Bleſſings that we can deſire to make us Holy and Happy for ever: All which GOD hath therefore in him, and for His ſake, promiſed to all that believe in Him.

Now the Word of GOD being thus fulfill'd, and his Juſtice abundantly ſatisfi'd for the Sins of Mankind, by the Death which his only begotten Son had ſuffer'd in their Nature and ſtead; the third day after He roſe again from the dead, and having continued 40 Days upon Earth, to convince his Diſciples that he was indeed riſen; He then went up to Heaven, where He hath been ever ſince, *and is now at the right Hand of GOD, Angels, Authorities and Powers being made ſubject to him.* 1 *Pet.* 3. 22. For GOD

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hath there *ſet Him above all Principalities, and Powers, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but alſo in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his Feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church which is His Body.* *Epheſ.* 1. 21, 22. as being *purchaſed with his Blood.* *Act.* 20. 28. It was for the ſake of His ſaid Church, that this Supreme Authority and Power over all things is given to Him, that he may order and diſpoſe of all things ſo, that nothing may ever deſtroy His Church, nor hinder the Salvation of any of the found Members of it, but that according to his Word, *Whoſoever believeth in Him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.* John 3. 16.

Such a Glorious, ſuch an Almighty Saviour have we now in Heaven, at the right Hand of GOD, where He is the *Mediator between GOD and Men.* 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. and is therefore *able to ſave them to the uttermoſt that come unto GOD by Him, ſeeing He ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* Heb. 7. 25. *For GOD hath exalted Him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give Repentance to* Iſrael *and Forgiveneſs of Sins.* Act. 5. 31. Firſt Repentance and then Forgiveneſs. And if we accordingly believe and truſt on Him

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in the first place to give us Grace to repent and turn to GOD with all our Hearts, He will most certainly give it us in the use of the Means which he hath appointed and settled in His Church for that End and Purpose. And when we have obtain'd that, then, and not till then, we may be sure that He will take us into His own particular Care, that He will wash us from our Sins in His Blood: He will make our Peace with GOD, and restore us to His Favour. He will supply the Defects of our Righteousness with His own. His Grace shall be alway sufficient for us, and his Strength made perfect in our Weakness thro' the whole Course of our Lives here, and then He will bring us to that everlasting Kingdom which he hath purchased for all that truly believe in Him and obey Him. Which GOD therefore grant we may all for the future do.

These are some of the great Truths reveal'd in the Gospel concerning Jesus Christ, which I thought it my Duty in His Name to put you in mind of, tho' I do not question but you know them already; and heartily wish that all Men did so. And that they had not only a superficial and speculative, but a practical and experimental Knowledge of them, for that after all is the *Knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him crucified*, which the Apostle speaks of, and ac-

counts

counts so excellent. Not that which swims only in the Brain, but that sinks into the Heart, moves the Affections, and puts us upon believing and living in all Respects according to what we know. So that we have them not only in the Notion and Theory, but see and tast the wondrous things that He hath done for us, and feel the happy Effects of them in our selves: finding by our own Experience, that He assumed our Humane, by our partaking of His Divine Nature: That He died for us, by our living to Him: That He is exalted above all things in Heaven, by our preferring Him before all things upon Earth. They who have attained to such a Knowledge of Christ as this, will need no Arguments to perswade them that it excells all other. They feel more of it than others can tell them: And more than they can tell to others. Whereas they who never had any such Sense or Experience of it upon their own Minds, will hardly be convinc'd of the Excellency of it by any Words that can be us'd about it. Neither indeed are there any to be found, whereby it can be fully express'd.

But howsoever, it may not be amiss to observe, That the Excellency of this Knowledge appears sufficiently from the Height and Excellency of the Objects upon which it

it is exercis'd. For whereas our Knowledge of other Things lies low and flat upon the Ground, perplex'd, and entangled among the Creatures which GOD hath made, this soars aloft upon him that made them; among the Divine Perfections which he manifested in the Redemption of Mankind, and the highest Mysteries of his holy and everlasting Gospel. For by knowing Christ Jesus, we know the Word and Son of GOD, *by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made that was made. John* 1. 2. By knowing the Son, we know the Father also, *whom no Man knoweth save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal him. Matt.* 11. 27. By knowing Jesus Christ and Him crucified, we know how *Grace* and *Truth* came into the World. *John* 1. 17. How the Almighty Creator of all things comes to be so merciful and propitious to fall'n Men, and not to the fall'n Angels, altho' they be both alike His Creatures. How all the Losses that we sustained in the first *Adam*, are abundantly repair'd and made up by the last *Adam*. How, *as by one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners; so by the Obedience of one, many are made Righteous. Rom.* 5. 19. How the Devotions and good Works which we sincerely perform come to be acceptable to

GOD,

GOD, notwithstanding their manifold Imperfections. How *all things come to work together for Good to thoem that love* GOD. *Rom.* 8. 28. How there comes to be such a Mediatour between GOD and Men, who can bring two Parties that are at an infinite Distance together, and reconcile them to one another. How we who at present are sinful Mortals upon Earth, may e're long be made glorified Saints in Heaven. But why do I offer at shewing any of those glorious Sights which the Knowledge of Jesus Christ lets us into? These are Contemplations fit for Angels. The Angels themselves desire to look into them; and the more they see, the more they admire and wonder. How much more should we do so, who are so highly concern'd in them, more than the Angels are? We certainly may well desire and determine with St. *Paul, not to know any thing, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

And yet it is much to be observ'd, that tho' this Knowledge be so high and wonderful, it is the most certain Knowledge that we can have of any thing that is. In comparison of which our Knowledge of other things is generally no more than bare Guess and Conjecture; as being receiv'd only from our Senses or Reason, or from the Testimony of other Men. Which ways we know

know are all fallible. Whereas we have the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, from the infallible Testimony of GOD himself: who hath revealed all things necessary for us to know concerning Him in his own Word. Whereby it comes to pass that we are as certain of every thing that is written or said there, concerning Jesus Christ, as we can be of the most evident thing that is. As certain that *He and the Father are one*, as that two and two make four. *John* 10. 30. As certain that *He came into the World to save Sinners*, as that there are any Sinners in the World to save. As certain that *He rose from the Dead*, as that we are now alive. As certain that *He is now at the right Hand of GOD in Heaven*, as that we are now in this place. For our Knowledge of these and such like things, being grounded upon the Word of GOD, of Truth it self, it must needs be as certain as it is possible to be; as certain as that GOD's Word is true.

And it is very well for us that it is so, considering the great use and need that we always have of it. I do not deny but that the Knowledge of other things is in many Cases very useful. Some to private Persons, some to publick Societies; some to whole Kingdoms: Some to Mankind in general: Some to the right understanding

of

of the Holy Scriptures, and ſo to the Knowledge of Chriſt himſelf. Yea, there is ſcarce any ſort of Knowledge but, ſome way or other, helps towards the raiſing, refining, and enlarging our Underſtanding, and ſo to the making us more capable of knowing Him. But whatſoever it may be at preſent, unleſs it tends to that End, at laſt it will ſtand us in no ſtead: For what if we were ſkilled in all the Arts and Sciences that ever were invented, and could manage them every one to the beſt advantage? What if we had the whole Syſtem of Logick in our heads, and could argue with all the Art and Sophiſtry that ever Men did? What if we could dive into the depths of Natural Philoſophy, and ſee into the Springs and Movements of all ſecond Cauſes? What if we had turned over all the Records of the Church, and the Hiſtories of all Places and Ages ſince the World began, and could reduce every thing that ever happen'd, to its own proper time? What if we could count the number of the Stars, call them all by their Names, and deſcribe their Motions to an Hairs breadth? What if we underſtood all Languages, and could diſcourſe with People of all the Nations upon Earth in their own Mother Tongue? Notwithſtanding all this, unleſs we know

Jeſus

Jesus Christ also, *and Him crucified*, we should be lost and undone for ever. For as much as there is no way to be saved but by Him: Neither can any be saved by Him, unless they believe in Him, nor believe in Him, unless they first know Him; for as the Apostle observes, *How can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard*, and so know not what to believe? *Rom.* 10. 14.

This Knowledge therefore being so necessary to our believing in Christ, it is so likewise to every thing requisite to our obtaining the End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls. In so much that we cannot make one true step towards Heaven without it, no more than the Children of *Israel*, could have gone through the Wilderness to the Land of *Canaan*, without having that Type of Christ, the Pillar of a Cloud by Day, and of Fire by Night to guide them. For the whole of our Salvation from first to last, is begun, continued, and finish'd by GOD our Saviour. And unless we know Him, we can neither know what to do, nor do any thing we know, in order to our being saved by Him. And therefore we see, how they who live without the Knowledge of Christ, live as without GOD in the World. *They may profess to know* GOD, *but in Works*

they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate Tit. 1. 16. Their Eyes are so blind that they cannot see, and their Hearts so hard, they cannot feel any difference between Good and Evil. *They may be wise to do evil, but to do good they have no Knowledge.* Jer. 4. 22. They live in perfect slavery to their own Humours and Passions, and to the Devil himself, being *taken Captive by him at his Will.* 2 Tim. 2. 26. And all because they know not Him, *who was manifested, to destroy the Works of the Devil.* 1 John 3. 8.

But as S^t *Peter* observeth, *Men escape the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* 2 Pet. 2. 20. For by it we know how to overcome the World, so as to live above it: How to resist the Devil, so as to make him flee from us. How to work out our Salvation, so as to make our Calling and Election sure. How to mortify our Sins, so as to walk in newness of Life, thro' all the changes and chances of this mortal Life till we come to Life Eternal. To which the true Knowledge of Christ, will as certainly bring us at last, as if we had it already. As we learn from Him who alone can give it, saying to his Father, *This is Life Eternal, that they might know thee*

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the only true GOD, *and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* John 17. 3.

When I think of these things, I cannot but reflect upon the Corruptions of the Age we live in, and the cause of them. It was our great happiness that in the last Age save one, the Doctine of our Church was so reform'd, that it agrees exactly with GOD's Holy Word, as understood and interpreted by his whole Catholick Church. And it might be reasonably expected, that where the Doctrine was so well reformed, Men's Lives would have been so too. But we find the contrary by sad experience. That piece of Reformation is still wanting, and seems to be reserv'd for this Age, and for this Happy and Glorious Reign, wherein some Attempts have been made already towards it. But all will be in vain, unless a way could be found out, that all who are born and bred within the Pale of our Church, may understand the Doctrine which she teacheth, particularly that which respects our Blessed Saviour. For otherwise, although the Branches may be lopp'd off, or kept from spreading abroad and above Ground, the root of Vice and Wickedness will still remain. For that can never be destroy'd but by the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, which he knows is but rarely found among us, and that hitherto

there hath not been that care taken for the Propagation of it, which he design'd and expected when he was Graciously pleased in so wonderful a manner, to cause the Doctrine of the Church of *England* to be so well reform'd.

But to our great Comfort, He knows withall that the Fault is not in our Church it self. For she hath done all she could to spread his Gospel all over the Kingdom, that all might know Him, from the highest to the lowest Person in it.

She hath order'd that all who are young or ignorant should be instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, every *Sunday* and *Holiday* throughout the Year. She hath set apart several Feast, and Fast-days every Year, to keep up the Memory, and put People in mind of what our Blessed Saviour said, or did, or suffer'd for us; and of what his Apostles, and Evangelists did or taught by his Direction and Assistance. She hath compos'd her Liturgy of such Lessons, Psalms, Hymns, Creeds, Prayers, and Collects, that it containeth all the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith: So that one would think it morally impossible, that any, who heartily use and attend diligently to the Prayers of our Church, as they ought to do, every day, should be ignorant of any one thing,

that

that is needful for them to know. So great care hath our Church taken, that all who live in her Communion might come to the true Knowledge of Christ their Saviour. And if her Rules and Orders were but as Religiously observ'd by the whole Nation, as they are wisely and piously contriv'd by Her, what an Understanding, what a Wise, what an Holy People should we then be? Then would be fulfill'd that which was spoken by the Prophet, That *the Earth*, at least this part of it, *shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*, Isa. 11. 9. And then we should clearly see of what mighty use and advantage it would be, not only for particular Persons, but for the whole Kingdom, *to know Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*

Neither is this so unpleasant, or so insipid a kind of Knowledge as some imagine. But they are such only who never tasted of it. For they who have, cannot but have found so much sweetness in it, that they can relish no other, but long for more and more of it every day, never thinking they can have enough. It is indeed the only true Joy and Comfort of a Christian's Heart. The Knowledge of other things may please our Fancies, this only can satisfy and delight our Souls.

For whatſoever elſe we know, be ſure we all know our ſelves to be Sinners, and if Sinners then liable to the Wrath of GOD, and to all the Curſes and Judgments that He hath threatned againſt Sinners. The thoughts whereof lie ſo heavy upon ſome Mens Mind, that they are ready to ſink down into Horror and Deſpair: And they make all Men ſometimes ſad and melancholy, do what they can, in the midſt of all their ſeeming Mirth and Jollity. And where ſhall we ſeek for any Comfort and Support? We may look where we will, but we ſhall never find any but in the Chriſtian Religion. For it is that only which affords us certain Principles whereon to truſt for GOD's Mercy in the Pardon of our Sins, and his Reconciliation to us, in his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleas'd. Wherefore they who know not Him, can ſee no ground on which to build their hope of Pardon and Salvation; but whenſoever they reflect upon themſelves, if they ever do ſo, are tormented with the frightful Apprehenſions of that Judgment and fiery Indignation which will at laſt devour them. Whereas, *to know Jeſus Chriſt and Him crucified*: To know that the only begotten Son of GOD came into the World to ſave Sinners, ſuch Sinners as we are: That He is the Propitiation for our Sins, and

for

for the Sins of the whole World: That He was deliver'd for our Offences, and raiſed again for our Juſtification; that He is now our Mediator and Advocate with the Father, appearing now in his Preſence on our behalf, and preparing a Place in Heaven for us againſt our Departure out of this wicked World; this raiſeth up our drooping Spirits: This fills our Souls with Solid and Subſtantial Joy: With Joy in Him, *Whom having not ſeen, ye love; in whom, though now ye ſee Him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8.

Laſtly, As this is the moſt ſublime, the moſt certain, the moſt uſeful and the moſt pleaſant Knowledge we can ever have; So it is the moſt laſting. For it is everlaſting. It is S^t *Jerome*'s Advice; *Diſcamus in terris quorum nobis ſcientia perſeveret in Cælo*; Let us learn thoſe Things upon Earth, the Knowledge whereof will continue with us in Heaven. This is the only Knowledge that will do ſo. When we die all our other Thoughts will periſh: But the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt will go along with us into the other World, and there ſtick by us for ever: And will be advanced alſo to its higheſt Perfection. *Now we ſee as through a Glaſs darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but*

then we ſhall know, even as we are known of Him, 1 Cor. 13. 12. *For then we ſhall be like Him, and ſee Him as He is*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. We ſhall live with Him, we ſhall behold His Glory, we ſhall enjoy His bleſſed Company; we ſhall admire Him, and love Him, and praiſe Him for ever.

From the Premiſes thus briefly laid down; I may conclude this plain Diſcourſe as S^t *Peter* concludes his ſecond Epiſtle to all Chriſtians, *Ye therefore, Beloved, ſeeing ye know theſe Things before; beware leſt ye alſo being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſs; but grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. To Him be Glory both now and for ever*, Amen.

SER-

SERMON VIII.

1 PET. ii. 5.

Ye also, as lively Stones, are built up a Spiritual House, an Holy Priesthood, to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to GOD *by Jesus Christ.*

WHEN the Lord, the Lord GOD Omnipotent, had by the Word of his Power commanded all things out of nothing, it is written, *That* GOD *saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good*, Gen. 1. 31. Every thing was just as He would have it, exactly fitted to the Ends and Uses for which He design'd it; and therefore it was very good in his Sight, or He was much pleased with it. And so He hath been ever since with all things in Heaven, except the Apostate Angels; every thing else moving and acting there continually according to his Will and Pleasure. Neither is there any thing that He

hath

hath made upon Earth, but what is very good in his Eyes, ſo that He is infinitely pleaſed with it, except Mankind; who being fall'n from their firſt Eſtate, are ſo far from being very good, that they are very bad in the Sight of GOD, as bad as bad can be: For it is written, *That GOD ſaw that the Wickedneſs of Man was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart, was only Evil continually.* *Gen.* 6. 5. This is the Caſe of Man in general, even of all Mankind, from firſt to laſt. There never was a mere Man from the Fall to this Day, that was every way ſuch as GOD made him: And therefore never one, that did any one thing that in it ſelf was perfectly good in the ſight of GOD, and ſo pleaſing or acceptable unto him. But the whole Race of Mankind being corrupted in all the Faculties of their Souls and Members of their Bodies, and always therefore acting irregularly and contrary to the Will of GOD, He is alway diſpleaſed with them, and with every thing they think, or ſpeak, or do of themſelves, or by their own natural Powers. So that he might juſtly have condemn'd them all to the ſame everlaſting Fire, *that is prepar'd for the Devil and his* Apoſtate *Angels.* And would certainly have done it, but that He knew how to advance the Glory of his

Good-

Goodneſs and Truth in reſtoring them to a Capacity of pleaſing him again, and enabling them accordingly to do ſo, if they will, and to be willing alſo to do it.

This is a Myſtery that is beyond the Reach of human Underſtanding. Neither could any Man have thought it poſſible, if GOD had not reveal'd it in his holy Word. But now that we have His Word for it, we have ſurer Grounds to believe it, than we have to believe any thing that we our ſelves can underſtand. From whence we may ſee how much we ought to value the Holy Scriptures; and likewiſe, how far the Chriſtian exceeds all other Religions. For, tho' all ſorts of People profeſs ſome kind of Religion, whereby they hope to pleaſe the GOD they worſhip; yet none have any ſure Ground to believe they worſhip the true GOD, nor to hope that he will be pleaſed with what they do, but only they who believe the Holy Scriptures both of the Old and New Teſtament to be given by his Inſpiration: Which ſeeing none but Chriſtians do, none but they can be ever certain that any thing they do is pleaſing unto GOD. But they may be certain of it, and ought to be ſo, in that they have the way and manner how to do it, moſt plainly reveal'd to them by GOD himſelf in many Places of his Holy Scriptures, and particularly

cularly in that which I have now read.

The Apoſtle writes this Epiſtle to the Elect or Saints of GOD. And having in the firſt Chapter put them in mind, how they became ſuch, even by being born again by the Word of GOD, *ver.* 21. In this he adviſeth them as *new born Babes to deſire the ſincere Milk of the ſame Word*, that as they were born, *ſo they may grow* by it. *ver.* 2. *If ſo be*, ſaith he, *ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious. ver.* 3. For if they had once taſted of it, as be ſure they had, they could not but long for more of the Grace of Chriſt: Here call'd the Lord, as appears from the following Words, *To whom coming, as unto a living Stone; diſallow'd indeed of Men, but choſen of GOD, and precious, ye alſo as lively Stones are built up a ſpiritual Houſe.* For the Church being wholly built upon Chriſt, and all our Hopes of Salvation depending upon Him; for the better ſtrengthening and confirming our Faith in Him, He is often ſpoken of in Holy Writ, under the Name and Notion of a *Rock* or *Stone. Behold, ſaith GOD by the Prophet, I lay in Zion for a Foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner Stone, a ſure Foundation; he that believeth in him, ſhall not make haſt*, or be confounded. Iſa. 28. 16. Rom. 9. 33. *And, the Stone, ſaith David,*

which

which the Builders refuſed, is become the Head of the Corner. Pſal. 118. 22. For that this Stone is Chriſt, appears from the many Places in the New Teſtament, where theſe Words are apply'd to him, Not only by his Apoſtle, *Acts* 4. 11. 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. but by Chriſt himſelf. *Matth.* 21. 42. *Mark* 12. 10. *Luke* 20. 17. And to this the Apoſtle alludes in this very place, ſaying, *Unto whom coming as to a living Stone, diſallow'd indeed of Men, but choſen of* GOD, *and precious*; which is the ſame in effect with his being *refuſed of the Builders, but choſen of* GOD *to be the Head of the Corner.* The Corner or Foundation Stone upon which the whole Fabrick reſteth. *For other Foundation can no Man lay than that is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 Cor. 3. 11.

But the Apoſtle here calls him a *living Stone,* to ſhew that this is only a Metaphorical Expreſſion; denoting his Firmneſs and Stability, together with the great Need there is of Him in erecting the Houſe here ſpoken of: But that He is not ſuch a *Stone* as thoſe we ſee upon Earth, that are all without Senſe and Life, but a *living Stone*; a Stone that hath Life in it ſelf, and gives Life to all that come unto Him, and are built upon Him. And therefore the Apoſtle having ſaid, *To whom coming as to a living Stone*; he adds, *Ye alſo as lively,* or

rather

rather as living *Stones*, *are built up a ſpiritual Houſe*. He is ſuch a living Stone himſelf, that he makes them alſo who come unto him, to be ſo. Who therefore as ſuch are built up a Spiritual Houſe: An Houſe of GOD, a Temple, wherein the living GOD himſelf is pleaſed to dwell; According to that of the Apoſtle to the Saints at *Corinth*, *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of* GOD, *and that the Spirit of* GOD *dwelleth in you?* 1 Cor. 3. 16. Chap. 6. 19. And to thoſe at *Epheſus*, *Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints and of the Houſhold of* GOD. *And are built upon the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief Corner Stone. In whom all the Building fitly framed together groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord. In whom ye alſo are builded together for an Habitation of* GOD *through the Spirit*, Eph. 2. 19. *&c.* Whence we ſee, that the whole Communion of Saints, the Body of Chriſt, are the ſpiritual Houſe ſpoken of in my Text; *the Houſe of* GOD, *or his Habitation*, by reaſon of his Spirit dwelling in them. And therefore they are all of the ſame Houſhold, the *Houſhold of* GOD, as it is here call'd: And elſewhere, *the Houſhold of Faith*, Gal. 6. 10. Becauſe it is by Faith that

that they are built upon Christ the Foundation of this House. Hence it is that they are all advised *to build up* one another *in their most holy Faith*. *Jud.* 20. And the Apostle often speaks of *edifying* the *Church*, *edifying* the *Body of Christ*, *edifying one another in Love*; that *all things may be done to edifying*, and the like. All which Expressions have Relation to this spiritual House, denoting the Necessity of our being edify'd or built up in Faith and Love, so that we may be real Parts of it, and grow up into a Holy Temple in the Lord.

But in every Temple of the Lord, it is necessary that there be likewise a Priesthood to offer Sacrifices suitable to such a Temple. And so there is here. For the Apostle having said, that the Saints are a *spiritual House* or Temple, he adds, That they are also an *holy Holy Priesthood*. As they are the *living Stones* of which this Temple is composed and consisteth, so they are likewise all of the Order of Priesthood; *an holy Priesthood*, proper for such an House where the most holy GOD resideth. This was first revealed in the Old Testament, where GOD said, *his People should be unto him a Kingdom of Priests*, Exod. 19. 6. A Kingdom wherein all the Subjects are both Kings and Priests: Or as St. *Peter* a little after

after my Text expreſſeth it, *a Royal Prieſthood*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. And how they come to be ſo, we learn from St. *John*, ſaying, *That Jeſus Chriſt hath made us Kings and Prieſts to GOD and the Father*, Rev. 1. 6. Chap. 5. 10. As he gives his Saints a Kingdom, ſo he conſecrates them all to be Prieſts; not ſuch as were under the Law, when the Prieſthood was confined to one Family, and offered up only carnal Sacrifices; but they are *an holy Prieſthood*, ordain'd *to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to GOD by Jeſus Chriſt.*

For the Underſtanding of which Words it will be neceſſary to conſider, what Sacrifices they are which the Saints offer up to GOD; wherefore they are call'd ſpiritual Sacrifices: and that theſe ſpiritual Sacrifices are acceptable to GOD by Jeſus Chriſt.

Firſt therefore, a Sacrifice in general is properly ſomething that we give or offer to GOD for our own. For tho' we have nothing but what He firſt gives to us, yet when He hath given it to us, we have a civil Right to it; it is our own in reſpect of all other Men. But when we give it back again to GOD, diveſting our ſelves of our own Right to it, and transferring it wholly to Him, then he looks upon it as a Sacrifice offer'd up to Him, and is plea-

pleaſed to accept of it as ſuch. Under the Law, GOD commanded, that Oxen and Sheep, and Lambs, and ſuch like living Creatures, ſhould be offer'd up in Sacrifice to Him, which being kill'd by a Prieſt, were conſum'd either by Fire upon the Altar, or elſe by thoſe who waited at it, and ſo were fed as it were at GOD's Table, of ſuch things as were offer'd to Him. But theſe Sacrifices being ordain'd only to foreſhew and typifie the *Lamb of GOD that taketh away the Sins of the World*, they ceaſed in courſe, when *He had offer'd up Himſelf as a Scrifice for our Sins upon the Croſs*. But now under the Goſpel, other kind of Sacrifices are requir'd of us. We are now commanded to *preſent our Bodies as a living Sacrifice*, Rom. 12. 1. Not to kill them, but to offer them up a-live, as a *living Sacrifice*, by devoting our ſelves wholly to the Service of GOD; by *mortifying our Members that are upon the Earth*, Col. 3. 5. and *crucifying the Fleſh with the Affections and Luſts*, Gal. 5. 24. By keeping our Bodies under, and bringing them into Subjection to our Souls; by ſubduing our Paſſions; *denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and living ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent World*, Tit. 2. 12.

Hence all manner of good, pious, and charitable Works, that are done in Obedience to God, and for His Service and Honour, are now call'd Sacrifices. As where the Apoſtle ſaith, That the Things which the *Philipians* ſent him, were *an Odour of a ſweet ſwell, a Sacrifice acceptable, well pleaſing unto* GOD, Phil. 4. 18. And *to do good*, ſaith he, *and to communicate forget not: For with ſuch Sacrifices* GOD *is well pleaſed*, Heb. 13. 16.

Indeed under the Law it ſelf, theſe were reckoned the beſt ſort of Sacrifices, and preferr'd before thoſe that were ordained in the Ceremonial Law. *Behold*, ſaith Samuel, *to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of Rams*, 1 Sam. 15. 22. *The Sacrifices of* GOD, ſaith David, *are a broken Spirit: a broken and a contrite Heart,* O GOD, *thou wilt not deſpiſe*, Pſal. 51. 17. *Wherewithal*, ſaith the Prophet, *ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high* GOD? *Shall I come before him with burnt Offerings, and Calves of a Year old? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of Rams, or with ten thouſands of Rivers of Oyl! Shall I give my Firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſion? The fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? He hath ſhewed thee, O Man,*

Man, what is good : And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy GOD, Mic. 6. 6, 7, 8.

There are many ſuch places in the old Teſtament where this is ſo plainly reveal'd, that the Scribe who talk'd with our Saviour, could not but own, That for a Man to love GOD *with all his Heart, and his Neighbour as himſelf, is more than all whole burnt Offerings and Sacrifices,* Mark 12. 33.

But Sacrificing in general, being a publick owning of GOD and his Soveraignty over the World, whereby we openly teſtifie our Acknowledgement and Belief, that He is the Almighty Creator, Poſſeſſor and Governor of all Things, and that we are obliged to Him for all the Bleſſings we enjoy; therefore by the Sacrifices which are here ſaid to be offer'd by the Holy Prieſthood ſpoken of in my Text, ſuch Duties ſeem to be more eſpecially underſtood, whereby we now ſet forth the Glory of GOD, by joyning together in making our publick Profeſſion of our Dependance upon Him, and our manifold Obligations to Him.

Particularly our open or publick Praying to Him, and to Him alone, for all the good

Things that we want. For hereby we plainly discover that we believe him to be the Author and Giver of every good and perfect Gift : That we neither have nor can have any thing but what we receive from him : And that he is so just and true to his Word, that he will give us whatsoever he knows to be good for us, *if we ask it of Him according to His Will.* And therefore under the Law it self, their publick Prayers always went along with their daily Sacrifices both Morning and Evening, and were performed at the same time, even while the Lamb was roasting upon the Altar. And this was it self also reckoned as a Sacrifice offer'd up to GOD. *Let my Prayer*, saith David, *be set forth before thee as Incense, and the lifting up of my Hands as the Evening Sacrifice.* Psal. 141. 2.

Especially considering that Prayer always was, and ought to be accompanied with Praise and Thanksgiving to GOD, which is so properly a Sacrifice, that it is often call'd by that Name. *I will offer*, saith David, *to thee the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving.* Psal. 116. 17. *And let them Sacrifice the Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, and declare his Works with rejoycing or singing,* Psal. 107. 22. And this even in those Days was more acceptable unto GOD, than

than all their other Sacrifices. *I will praise the Name of* GOD, saith he, *with a Song, and will magnifie him with Thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an Ox or Bullock that hath horns and hoofs.* Psal. 69. 30, 31. The Apostle also, to shew that this is properly an Evangelical Sacrifice, such as St *Peter* speaks of in my Text, saith, *By him therefore*, even by Christ, *let us offer the Sacrifice of praise to* GOD *continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his Name*, Heb. 13. 15.

But the Sacrifice that is most proper and peculiar to the Gospel, is the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper, instituted by our Lord himself, to succeed all the bloody Sacrifices in the *Mosaick Law.*

For tho' we cannot say, as some absurdly do, that this is such a Sacrifice whereby Christ is again offer'd up to GOD both for the Living and the Dead; yet it may as properly be call'd a Sacrifice as any that was ever offered, except that which was offer'd by Christ Himself. For his indeed was the only true expiatory Sacrifice that was ever offer'd. Those under the Law, were only Types of his: And were called Sacrifices only upon that account, because they typified and represented that which he was to offer for the

Sins of the World. And therefore the Sacrament of Chriſt's Body and Blood, may as well be called by that Name as they were. They were Typical, and this is a commemorative Sacrifice. They foreſhewed the Death of Chriſt to come: This ſhews forth his Death as already paſt. *For as often*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's Death, till he come.* 1 Cor. 11. 26. This is properly our Chriſtian Sacrifice, which neither *Jews* nor *Gentiles* can have any ſhare in; As the Apoſtle obſerves; *We have an Altar, whereof they have no right to eat, which ſerve the Tabernacle.* Heb. 13. 10. An Altar, where we partake of the great Sacrifice which the Eternal Son of GOD offer'd up for the Sins of the whole World, and ours among the reſt; That Almighty GOD may be reconciled to us, and receive us again into his Love and Favour, and make us happy in the Enjoyment of it for ever. Which is ſo great a Bleſſing, that they who really mind their own Good and Welfare, can no more forbear to partake of this Sacrament when they may, than they can forbear to eat when they are hungry, and have Meat before them.

These are those Spiritual Sacrifices which the Holy Priesthood, or whole Body of Saints, offer up to GOD. The Apostle calls them *Spiritual*, in opposition to those *Carnal Sacrifices* that were offer'd by the *Levitical* Priesthood. And because they are of a Spiritual Nature, and performed in a Spiritual Manner, being offer'd up in the Spirits of the Saints as well as Bodies: And by the Spirit of GOD himself, dwelling in them, and so consecrating them *a Spiritual House, an holy Priesthood*, and enabling them to offer up these Sacrifices in the Name of Christ, and through the Merits of that Sacrifice which he hath offer'd for them: According to that of the Apostle in the place before quoted, by him *therefore let us offer up the Sacrifice of praise to GOD continually*. It is by him only that they can be offer'd up so as to be acceptable unto GOD. And when they are offer'd up by him, they can be acceptable unto GOD no otherwise than by him too. As we are here taught by the Apostle, saying, That these *Spiritual Sacrifices* are *acceptable to GOD by Jesus Christ.*

All that I have hitherto discoursed upon these Words, being only in order to clear the way for that which I chiefly design'd in the choice of them, even to shew how our Spiritual Sacrifices come to be accep-

table to GOD by Jesus Christ (to our unspeakable comfort); I shall now by his Assistance search into the bottom of it, and lay it as open as I can. For which purpose we may first observe, that, by the *Levitical* Law, when a Man brought *an Offering to the Lord*, of his Flock or his Herd; *the Priest was to burn it all upon the Altar*, and then it was said *to be a burnt Sacrifice, an Offering made by Fire, of a sweet Savour unto the Lord.* Levit. 1. 9, 13. *&c.* What we translate, sweet Savour, in the *Hebrew* is, ריח ניחוח, a Smell of Rest. Such a Smell, whereby GOD rested satisfied with the Sacrifice from whence it came, instead of the Death of the Offerer, or such Punishment as was due unto him for his Sins. But he was first to *put his hand upon the head of his burnt Offering: And then*, the Text saith, *it shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him*, v. 4. The Death of the Sacrifice was accepted of instead of the Death which he must otherwise have suffer'd for his Sin. So that GOD was thereby atoned or reconciled to him, and well pleased again with him, as much as if he had not sinned. Not by any Vertue in the Beast that was killed and burnt, but by reason of the Typical Relation it had to the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ,

whereby

whereby he offer'd up himſelf in our ſtead and ſo to make atonement, or propitiation for our Sins.

Now as the Apoſtle in my Text calls our Devotions and good Works by the Name of *Sacrifices*, ſo he aſſerts them to be acceptable to GOD, as the Legal Sacrifices were. St *Paul* expreſſeth the ſame thing in the very Words of the Law, ſaying, That the good Works of the *Philippians* were *an Odour of a ſweet ſmell.* And then he explains it, by adding, that they *were a Sacrifice acceptable, well pleaſing to GOD.* Phil. 4. 18. And ſo all the good Works that we ſincerely perform in Obedience to the Will of GOD, altho' they are not abſolutely perfect in themſelves, yet he accepts of them as much as if they were, and is as well pleaſed with them, and with him that doth them. He looks upon them as good Works, ſuch as he would have us do, and accordingly rewards us for them, by giving us thoſe great Bleſſings which he hath freely promiſed to thoſe who obey and ſerve him. Thus therefore our Spiritual Sacrifices are here ſaid to be acceptable to GOD. But not for any worth or value in themſelves, but by Jeſus Chriſt. To underſtand this, we muſt conſider,

1. There

1. There is nothing which we do, that is acceptable or well-pleasing to GOD in it self. For GOD is pleased with nothing but what is exactly agreeable to his own Will. But nothing that we do is so in all points. But do what we can, we still fail either in the Matter, or in the Manner, or in the End, or in some Circumstance or other. So that, as the wise Man observes, *there is not a just Man, that doth good and sinneth not.* Eccl. 7. 20. not only, that always doth good, and never sins: But that doth not sin in the good he doth, by not doing it as he ought in all respects. But nothing is good, that is not all good: without any failure or defect in it. Which seeing nothing we do, is: Therefore nothing we do, can be of it self acceptable to him, *who is of purer Eyes than to behold iniquity*, any Iniquity, without Abhorrence and Indignation.

In the next place we may observe, that as all our Spiritual Sacrifices are thus unclean in the sight of GOD, so it is not in the Power of any or all the Creatures in the World to cleanse them, so as to make them acceptable to him, without Christ. Neither is there Salvation in any other. *For there is no other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must saved.* Act. 4. 12. Whereby we can be

saved

ſaved from the Wrath of GOD, which is due to every Sin or Tranſgreſſion of his Law, one as well as another; to the Defects and Imperfections of our beſt Actions, as well as to the worſt that we ever did, or ever can do.

And therefore Chriſt himſelf ſaith, *That without him, we can do nothing*. Joh. 15. 5. Nothing that is truly good: Nothing that GOD will accept of, without him. Inſomuch that without him, our whole Lives are but as one continued Sin and Provocation againſt him, in whom we live. As they who do not believe in him, will one day find by woful experience, notwithſtanding all their pretenſions to Vertue ann good Works. For whatſoever they may pretend, they can neither exerciſe any one Vertue, nor do any one Work that can be properly termed Good, and therefore acceptable to GOD, without Chriſt.

But by him St *Peter* here ſaith, that our *Spiritual Sacrifices are acceptable to GOD*: And ſo doth St *Paul* too, where he ſaith, that *we are accepted in the beloved*. Eph. 1. 6. In Him, of whom GOD the Father ſaid, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am pleaſed*. Matt. 3. 17. *ch*. 17. 5. This was proclaimed by a Voice from Heaven upon two ſeveral Occaſions, at his

his Baptiſm, and at his Transfiguration; the better to aſſure us, that He is the beloved Son in whom GOD is pleaſed to manifeſt his Love and Favour to Mankind: That as *the Law was given by Moſes, Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.* Joh. 1. 17. Grace: All the Grace and Mercy that we receive from GOD, comes by Him. Particularly that whereby He is graciouſly pleaſed to accept of any thing that we Sinful Mortals do. And therefore in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, the Apoſtle prays, That *GOD would make them perfect in every good Work, to do his Will, working in them that which is well pleaſing in his ſight through Jeſus Chriſt.* Heb. 13. 21. It is only through him that GOD enables to do good Works; and it is only through Him, that the good Works we do are well-pleaſing unto GOD,

But how this comes to paſs, that what we do, ſhould be acceptable to GOD by another, even by Jeſus Chriſt, is a Myſtery which the Angels deſire to look into, and the more they look the more they Admire; And ſo ſhall we, if we do but caſt our Eye upon what is revealed of it in GOD's holy Word. Where we find,

1. That this Jeſus Chriſt is the Eternal Son of GOD, of one Subſtance with the Father, and that in the fulneſs of Time, he took

took upon him the Form or Nature of Man, so as to be in One and the Same Person both GOD and Man; Man in general. Not only a particular human Person as every one of us is, but as the *first Man Adam* was, one in whom the whole Nature of Man is contain'd. Who therefore is called also the *Second Man.* 1 Cor. 15. 47. and *Adam*, that is, Man in general, as the *First* was, *v.* 45. But with this mighty Advantage, that the *First* was only Man: The *Second*, not only Man, but GOD too. GOD of the same Nature with the Father, as well as Man of the same Nature with all other Men.

2. We there find, that as the *First* Man *Adam*, and in him all Mankind broke the Law of GOD; so the *Second* kept it perfectly, never doing any one thing that was there Forbidden, nor leaving any one thing undone that was there Commanded. But he went about continually doing Good, and fulfilling all Righteousness. So that his whole Life as Man, was one continued Act of Obedience to the Will of GOD. Which being performed by him in the whole Nature of Man, was as much as was required of all that are of that Nature, and more too. Forasmuch as no more was or could be required of all Mankind than the Obedience of so many Finite

nite Creatures; Whereas his was the Obedience of a Perſon that is Infinite; and therefore infinitely ſurpaſſing all that could ever have been done by the whole Race of Mankind.

3. We there alſo find, that He was thus obedient not only through the whole courſe of his Life, but to Death it ſelf, *even the Death of the Croſs.* Phil. 2. 8. He did not only ſuffer that accurſed Death, but he ſuffer'd it in perfect Obedience to the Will of GOD. But Death being due only for Sin, he never having ſinned, could not ſuffer it for himſelf. But as he ſuffer'd it in the Nature of Man, ſo he ſuffer'd it for all that are of that Nature. And therefore he is there ſaid to have died for us, and for our Sins: To have *taſted Death for every Man.* Heb. 2. 9. and *to have given himſelf a Ranſom for all.* 1 *Tim.* 2. 6. For all of that Nature in which he died. So that his Death was a ſufficient Price for the Redemption of all Mankind; It being equivalent to the Death of all Men; And of infinitely greater Worth and Value, in that it was the Death of an Infinite Perſon.

4. We there find alſo that this Divine Perſon, having thus ſuffer'd Death in the Nature of Man, he in that roſe again, went up into Heaven, and is there exal-

ted

ted at the Right hand of GOD, to be the *Mediator between GOD and Men*, in whose Nature he is now there, appearing *in the Presence of GOD for us.* 1 Tim. 2. 5. Heb. 9. 24. *As the Propitiation for our Sins, and for the Sins of the whole World.* 1 Joh. 2. 2. And *is able to save to the utmost all that come unto GOD by Him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* Heb. 7. 25.

Lastly, we find in holy Writ, that they who *believe* in this Jesus Christ, are said to *be in him*, to *abide in him*, as a Member in the Body or a Branch in a Tree, and so to *partake of him.* Heb. 3. 14. of all he did and suffer'd upon Earth, and of all he is now doing in Heaven: Where He looks upon them as His own, His Disciples, His Servants, His Friends, His Brethren, His Sheep, His peculiar People; and accordingly takes particular care of them, as their Saviour, their Mediator and Advocate with the Father, interceding continually for them, and for them only. *I pray for them*, saith he, *I pray not for the World, but for them, which thou hast given me, for they are thine.* Joh. 17. 9.

Now these things being thus briefly laid down together, we may easily see, how the *Spiritual Sacrifices* which the *Spiritual House* and *Holy Priesthood* here spoken of,

offer

offer unto GOD, come to be *acceptable* to Him by *Jesus Christ*. For this Spiritual House being wholly made up of such as come to Christ, and believe on Him, as we learn from the Context, *v.* 4, 6, 7. Therefore they are all built up in him, as St *Peter* here saith, or as St *Paul* expresseth it; *In him they are builded together, for an habitation of* GOD *through the Spirit*. Eph. 2. 22. So that they have a near Relation to Him, and an Interest in Him, and He in them: They are wholly His; and are actuated and influenc'd by that Holy Spirit that proceeds from Him, as the Members of a Body are by the Animal Spirits that flow from the Head. *Rom.* 8. 9, 13, 14. It is by this the Spirit of Christ, and so by Christ himself that they offer all their Spiritual Sacrifices, and do all the good Works that are required of them: According to that of the Apostle, *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*. Phil. 4. 13. But what is done by Christ or his Holy Spirit, is done by GOD Himself. And so far as any thing is done by himself, so far be sure he is well pleas'd with it, as He is with every thing which He Himself doth. This therefore is one Reason wherefore the *Spiritual Sacrifices*, which His People offer are *acceptable to* GOD *by Jesus*

Jesus Christ, because they are offer'd by Him, in whom GOD is well-pleased.

But although they be thus led by the Spirit of Christ, yet while they are in the Body, the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit; so that do what they can, there are many Blemishes and Imperfections in their best Sacrifices, which would hinder their being acceptable unto GOD, if Christ did not cover them with his own Sacrifice. But He having offer'd up Himself as a Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World, by Vertue of that, He makes Atonement and Reconciliation for all the Sins of those who believe in Him, and particularly for the Imperfections of their Duties and Performances: For which He Himself hath born the Punishments, and therefore intercedes, That GOD would not be angry or displeas'd with them: But be graciously pleased to accept of the imperfect Sacrifices which they offer Him, for the sake of that absolutely perfect Sacrifice which He himself had offer'd in their stead. And hence it is that Almighty GOD having His Sacrifice always in His Eye, overlooks the Imperfections of theirs, and accepts of what they do, through the Merits of that Death which His only Begotten Son hath suffer'd for them.

But that nothing might be wanting to render the good Works which his Servants do by his Assistance, as acceptable to GOD through Him, as it is possible for them to be, he doth not only wash out their spots with His Blood, but he adorns them also with his own Righteousness, that perfect Righteousness which he fulfill'd through the whole course of his Life. For that also being, as we have seen, perform'd in the whole Nature of Man, and therefore applicable to all that are of that Nature, he accordingly applies it to all that by Faith come unto Him for it. As all His faithful People be sure do: As well as St *Paul*, when he desired to *be found in Christ, not having his own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ: The Righteousness which is of* GOD *by Faith*. Phil. 3. 9. Where we see, he desired and accordingly had another Righteousness besides that of the Law, the Righteousness which is through the Faith of Christ, *who knew no Sin*, and yet *was made Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of* GOD *in Him*. 2 Cor. 5. 21. *Who of* GOD *was made unto us Righteousness as well as Wisdom*. 1 Cor. 1. 30. *The Lord our Righteousness*. Jer. 23. 6. So that we

may

may every one ſay, *Surely in the Lord have I Righteouſneſs and Strength.* Iſa. 45. 24. *Strength* to do good Works, and *Righteouſneſs* to make them acceptable when they are done. As they may well be: Seeing it is the Righteouſneſs of GOD Himſelf, who is well-pleaſed with every thing that He himſelf doth, and with nothing elſe.

From hence therefore we may ſee, how the Sacrifices which his People offer come to be acceptable to GOD by Jeſus Chriſt, even becauſe they are offer'd by the Aſſiſtance of His Holy Spirit: Cleanſed by the Merits of the Death He ſuffer'd in their ſtead, and perfected by the Righteouſneſs which He himſelf performed in their Nature. And being begun, continued and finiſhed in and by himſelf, he looks upon them as his own Works, and is therefore well-pleas'd with them, as he was with every Thing He made at firſt; when it was ſaid, *That GOD ſaw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good.*

Now what a mighty Encouragement is this to do all the good we can in the World? For who would not pleaſe Him that governs all Things in it, and diſpoſeth of every thing as He himſelf

pleaſeth ! And yet we ſee, that we little, we ſinful Creatures upon Earth, may do ſuch Things as are acceptable and well-pleaſing to the Great GOD of Heaven, though not in themſelves, yet by His only Begotten Son Jeſus Chriſt. But for that purpoſe we muſt do all ſuch good Works as He hath ſet us. And whatſoever we do in Word or Deed, we muſt do it in the Name of the Lord Jeſus. Believing and truſting on Him to perfume it with the Incenſe of his Ointments, that ſo it may be acceptable to GOD by Him. And then it will moſt certainly be ſo. For we have the Word of GOD Himſelf here for it : As we have now heard. And therefore when we have offer'd any Sacrifice, or performed any Service to Him, we ought not to doubt, but be fully perſwaded in our Minds, that although there be no Merit, but many Imperfections in it, yet that GOD is Graciouſly pleas'd to accept of it, and will accordingly reward us for it, both in this World and the next, thro' the Merits and Mediation of his Son Jeſus Chriſt : To whom be Glory for ever.

SER-

SERMON IX.

ACTS, xiii. 3.

And when they had fasted and pray'd, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away.

IT is our great Happiness that we live in so pure and sincere a Part of Christ's Holy Catholick Church, that as we have nothing superfluous, so neither is there any thing wanting that can any way conduce to our Eternal Salvation in it, much less any thing that is necessary in order thereunto: As, amongst other things, the right Ordination of those who administer the Means of Grace, must needs be acknowledg'd to be; for seeing we can have no Grace or Power to do Good, but what is derived to us from GOD, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the Use of the Means which he hath establish'd in his Church for that Purpose; unless those

Means be rightly and duly adminiſtred, they loſe their Force and Energy, and ſo can never attain the End, wherefore they were eſtabliſhed. Neither is there any thing more neceſſary to the right Adminiſtration of the Means of Grace, than that they who adminiſter them be rightly ordain'd and authoriſed to do it, according to the Inſtitution and Command of him that did eſtabliſh them. For ſeeing they do not work naturally, but only by Vertue of the Inſtitution and Promiſe annexed to it; unleſs that be duly obſerved, we have no Ground to expect that the Promiſe ſhould be performed, nor by conſequence that they ſhould be effectual to the Purpoſes for which they are uſed.

And certainly there neither is, nor ever was any Provincial or National Church upon Earth, wherein the Inſtitution of Chriſt and his Holy Apoſtles in this Particular, hath been more punctually obſerved, than it is in ours. For as the Biſhops and Paſtors of our Church have by a ſucceſſive Impoſition of Hands continued all along from the Apoſtles, receiv'd the ſame Spirit which Chriſt breathed into them for the effectual Adminiſtration of the Word and Sacraments; ſo do they after the ſame manner confer the ſame Spirit upon others even by laying their Hands upon them, according

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to the Inſtitution of Chriſt made known and confirmed to us by the Practice of his Apoſtles and Catholick Church in all Ages ſince. And herein it is that the Eſſence of Ordination doth properly conſiſt. Neither doth our Church thus ſtrictly obſerve this Inſtitution by uſing this Apoſtolical Impoſition of Hands upon ſuch Occaſions in general only, but likewiſe ſhe uſeth the ſame Means and Methods that the Apoſtles did, for the preparing thoſe whom ſhe intends to ordain for the receiving the Holy Ghoſt by ſuch Impoſition of Hands, and for the more effectual obtaining it for them. For which Purpoſe ſhe appoints certain Seaſons every Year for this great Work, and requires that all her Members joyn together at theſe Times in Faſting and Prayer to Almighty GOD for his Direction of the Biſhops who ſhall then ordain, and for His Grace and Heavenly Benediction upon thoſe who ſhall be then ordained to any Holy Function. And that this is exactly agreeable to the Practice of the Holy Apoſtles in this Caſe, is plain from theſe Words, *And when they had faſted and pray'd, and laid their Hands on them, they ſent them away.* They firſt faſted and prayed, and then laid their Hands on them.

The Occaſion of the Words in brief was this. There were in the Church of *Antioch*, five Perſons eminent for the Gift of Propheſying and Teaching, and as they were on a certain time together, faſting and praying, and miniſtering to the Lord, the Holy Ghoſt either by Inſpiration, they being Prophets, or by ſome particular Revelation ſaid to them, *Separate me* Barnabas *and* Saul, two of the Company, *for the Work whereunto I have called them.* From whence we may obſerve, how neceſſary it is that they who are admitted to the ſacred Miniſtry of the Goſpel, be externally as well as internally call'd, and publickly ordained to it by the Church. *Saul* was called before by Chriſt Himſelf, and both He and *Barnabas* were Prophets Divinely Inſpired, and yet for all that, they muſt be outwardly called and ordained by the Church too, before they could be ſent out to preach the Goſpel. Yea, the Holy Ghoſt and ſo GOD Himſelf commands it, who at the ſame time that he commanded them to be ſeparated or ordained by the Church, could if He had pleas'd have come upon them without the Impoſition of Hands, or the Miniſtry of any Men. But howſoever to keep up the Order which Chriſt hath eſtabliſhed in his Church, He only ſignifies his Pleaſure that He would have them ordain'd,

dain'd, and then thoſe Prophets and Teachers, which are ſuppoſed to have been ſome Biſhops or Paſtors in and about *Antioch*, muſt lay their Hands upon them, that ſo they might by that Means receive the Holy Ghoſt and Power to adminiſter the Word and Sacraments. Which is a full and undeniable Argument for the Neceſſity of Perſons being ſolemnly and publickly ordain'd by the Impoſition of Hands, before they undertake to miniſter in the Church, whatſoever Gifts or Parts, or inward Calling they pretend to. For none certainly could ever pretend to any inward Call to the Miniſtry more than *Paul* and *Barnabas* might: And yet it ſeems that would not ſerve their Turn, but they muſt be outwardly called and ordained by the Church too, before they preſume to meddle with any Holy Function. And queſtionleſs the great Reaſon why this is ſo punctually deſcribed and recorded by the Holy Ghoſt in Scripture, was that all People might take Notice of it, and not expect that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould ordain them Himſelf, when he would not ordain thoſe Eminent Saints *Paul* and *Barnabas* Himſelf, but leaves them to the Church, and expreſly commands them to be ordained by her. *Separate*, ſaith he, *Barnabas and Saul to the Work whereunto I have called them.* It

ſeems

ſeems He Himſelf had call'd them to the Work, and yet for all that they muſt be ordained by Men, before they would enter upon it.

The Holy Ghoſt having thus commanded the Prophets and Teachers there preſent to ſeparate theſe two Perſons, it follows, *and when they had faſted and pray'd, and laid their Hands upon them, they ſent them away.* From whence we may obſerve;

1. That altho' the Holy Ghoſt ſaid only, *ſeparate me* Barnabas *and* Saul, they knew well enough what he meant by it, even that they ſhould lay their Hands upon them, and ſo ordain or ſeparate them *to the Work whereunto they were called.* Which plainly ſhews, that the Rite or Ceremony of laying Hands upon theſe who were to be ſet apart for the Work of the Miniſtry, was not only commonly known at that time, but looked upon as neceſſary to be obſerved; and that it was approved of by the Holy Ghoſt Himſelf, is manifeſt from the following words, for ſo ſoon as Hands were laid upon them, it is ſaid, that *they were ſent by the Holy Ghoſt.* v. 4.

2. We may obſerve hence that before they would lay their Hands upon *Barnabas* and *Saul*, they faſted and prayed. Which certainly is recorded on purpoſe for our imitation, that the Church in all Ages might

might follow so good an Example, and not lay Hands upon any Persons for the admitting them to any holy Function, untill that they have fasted and pray'd, as they here did.

Now we, in Imitation of this holy Example, and in Conformity to the Practice of the Catholick and Apostolick Church, being now assembled here upon the same Occasion, as these were, when they ordain'd *Barnabas* and *Saul*, even to fast and pray in order to the laying on of Hands upon Persons to be set apart for the Sacred Ministry of the Church, it may not be amiss if we consider a little how reasonable and necessary it is that we should do so. It is true, this one Instance is not only a sufficient Warrant for it, but it lays an Obligation upon us to do it. But howsoever, as we cannot imagine but they had great Reasons for it, so it must needs be very convenient to consider what they were, both to justifie our present Assembling, and to excite those who are to be ordain'd, to a more serious Performance of these two great Duties of *Fasting* and *Prayer*, as preparatory to their Ordination.

First, as for *Fasting*, we shall soon acknowledge the great Use of that, in order to the fitting Persons for Ordination, if we do but consider how much it conduceth towards

wards an holy and good Life, and to the fitting and qualifying us for the Service of GOD in general, both in its own Nature, and by Virtue of the Promiſes which GOD hath made to it.

In what Senſe Faſting in its ſelf is one great Means of our being and doing good, we ſhall eaſily underſtand, if we do but conſider two things.

1. That the Soul, the Seat of all Vertue and Goodneſs, altho' it be a diſtinct Subſtance from the Body, and ſo is capable of acting ſeparately from it, even whilſt it is in it, yet ſo long as it is ty'd to the Body, and actually informs it, ſo as to be but one Part of that Compoſition which we call Man, it ordinarily makes uſe of the Organs of the Body, eſpecially of the Animal Spirits in all its Actions. And theſe only are properly call'd Human Actions, which are thus perform'd by the whole Man. Which therefore cannot but depend very much upon the Temper of the Body that concurrs towards the Performance of them. As we find by daily Experience they do; for if our Bodies be out of Tune, ſo are our Minds too. If any thing affect our Heads, diſturb our Brains, and ſo diſorders the Animal Spirits, which the Soul makes uſe of in its Operations, they are likewiſe diſorderly and irregular. As in Muſick, tho'

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the Artiſt be never ſo skilful, yet if his Inſtrument be out of tune, there can be no Harmony or Melody, in what he plays upon it. Yea, none of us but may eaſily obſerve, that whatſoever Humour prevails moſt in the Body, as Phlegm, Choller, Melancholly, or the like, our Actions are uſually tainted with it. Inſomuch, that by them we may eaſily diſcover what that Humor is which is moſt predominant. From whence it plainly appears, that ſo long as the Soul is in the Body, altho' it was deſign'd to rule and govern it, yet it is apt to be govern'd by it, and to indulge and humor it ſo far as to follow not its own Reaſon and Judgment, but the more impetuous Inclinations of the ſenſitive Part, altho' it be to its own Ruine and Deſtruction.

2. Hence therefore it neceſſarily follows in the next place, that Faſting and Abſtinence cannot but conduce much to the Exerciſe of true Piety and Virtue, in that, if duly perform'd, it keeps the Body under, and brings it into Subjection to the Soul. By which Means, the Soul being kept always in its Throne, with full Power and Authority over its Subjects, the inferiour Faculties, and being under no Reſtraint from them, its Reaſonings would be always clear, its Judgments ſound, its Coun-

Counſels deliberate; it would always act like its ſelf, a rational and ſpiritual Subſtance, and ſo would be as free from all brutiſh and ſenſual Vices, as when ſeparate from the Body which inclines it to them. And then it will begin to reliſh ſpiritual Objects as ſuitable to its own Nature. For it will look upon Vertue and Vice, not as they are falſly repreſented by the Imagination corrupted with the Humours of the Body, but as they are in themſelves, and ſo diſcern clearly how lively and amiable the former is; how odious and deteſtable the latter, and by conſequence exert all its Power to follow the one, and avoid the other.

To explain this more fully, I might deſcend to Particulars, and ſhew how Faſting and Abſtinence, by keeping the Body under, doth of it ſelf contribute very much to the mortifying of moſt Luſts, and to the quickning the contrary Graces in us. For which end, I need not inſtance in Glutтony and Drunkenneſs: For theſe being directly contrary, yea, contradictory to true Faſting, where this is rightly obſerv'd theſe Vices muſt needs ceaſe of their own accord, and the contrary Virtues, of Temperance and Sobriety take their Places. The ſame may be ſaid of Luxury and Uncleanneſs, for that proceeding only from too

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great a Plenitude and Luxuriancy of Humours in the Body, if the Body be kept under, as it ought, we can have no Inclinations to such Vices as those.

But there are other Vices also which at first sight may seem more remote to our present Purpose, as not depending so much upon the Temper of the Body, and yet they also may be very much prevented or cur'd by Fasting. As for Example: Are we apt to be angry and peevish, to fret and be disturb'd at every little thing that happens, as many are? This commonly proceeds from immoderate Dyet, or constant Feeding to the full, which breeds abundance of Choller, and overheats the Animal Spirits, whereby they are apt to take fire, and be enflam'd at every thing that occurs contrary to our present Desires. But by Fasting and constant Abstinence, the Choller would be abated, the Spirits cooled, and so the Mind reduced to a sedate, meek and gentle Temper.

And so for Self-conceitedness, Covetousness, and such like Sins as proceed commonly from the Corruption of the Fancy caus'd by those malignant Humours, which by reason of over much eating, are exhaled from the Stomach into the Head, and there disturb the Imagination so as to represent things as in a magnifying Glass,

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and make them ſeem what they are not, Great, and Good. Faſting prevents the very engendring of ſuch Fumes, and by conſequence, the Corruption of the Fancy by them. By which Means, the Mind is able to judge all things as they are, and ſo to ſee clearly that there is nothing in our ſelves that we can juſtly be proud of, nor in this World, that we can in reaſon deſire or covet to make us happy.

And then on the other ſide, as it helps towards the ſuppreſſing of moſt Vices, ſo alſo towards the Exerciſe of Grace and Vertue, eſpecially to the due Performance of our Devotions, whether publick or Private. For whence comes that Dulneſs? whence thoſe Diſtractions which we commonly find at ſuch times? whence, I ſay, come they, but from that Hurry of groſs Vapours in the Brain, which obſtruct its Paſſages, and crowd about it ſo diſorderly, that the Soul cannot, without much Time and Pains, rally them together, and reduce them into ſuch an Order, as to make any tolerable uſe of them? And therefore as theſe Diſtractions are cauſed by overmuch eating, ſo they may in a great Meaſure be cured by Faſting. Hence it is that none of us but may find by Experience, that we can never perform any ſpiritual Exerciſe with that Life and Vigour, with that Chear-

Chearfulneſs and Alacrity, with that conſtant Preſence and compoſure of Mind, as when our Bodies are empty, and ſo kept under, as to be in due Subjection to the Soul.

I might inſtance in many other Particulars, whence to ſhew, how Faſting doth of it ſelf contribute much to the Extirpation of moſt Vices, and to the planting and growth of true Vertue and Goodneſs in us. But moſt others depend upon, or may be referr'd to theſe already mention'd. And therefore there is the ſame Reaſon for them as there is for theſe; ſo that we may juſtly conclude this with a remarkable Paſſage of S^t *Jerome*, in his Epiſtle to *Celantia*, where he ſaith; That Faſting and Abſtinence, *non caſtitati tantummodò, ſed omnibus omnino virtutibus opitulatur.*

But the Great and Principal Reaſon of all, why it doth ſo, is ſtill behind: And that is, becauſe that Faſting is ſo pleaſing and acceptable to Almighty GOD, that he hath promiſed a Bleſſing a Reward to it, whenſoever it is rightly performed. And that too, not by the Mouth of a Prophet, an Apoſtle, an Angel, but by his own Divine Mouth, when he was here upon Earth. For our Lord himſelf ſaith, *When thou faſteſt, anoint thy Head, and waſh thy Face, that thou appear not unto*

Men to Faſt, but to thy Father which is in ſecret; and thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret, ſhall reward thee openly, Matt. 6. 18. From whence it is plain, that if a Man Faſt, not out of a vain Oſtentation to be ſeen of Men and thought Holy, but out of a ſincere Deſign to keep his Body under, and ſo fit himſelf the better for the Service of GOD, that Man ſhall moſt certainly be rewarded for it. But what Reward ſhall he have? Why, GOD will bleſs and ſanctify it to the great Ends and Purpoſes for which it is deſign'd. *Faſting* as I have ſhewn, doth conduce much to our being Holy, but it cannot make us ſo. That is only in the Power of GOD, the only Fountain of all true Grace and Holineſs; but he being well pleaſed with Faſting where it is duly performed, doth by his own Grace and Spirit make it effectual for the ſubduing our Luſts, and for the Performance of all Holy and Good Works.

For our better underſtanding of this we may conſider, That altho' GOD can work either with Means or without Means, or by contrary Means, as he himſelf ſees good, yet he ordinarily makes uſe of the moſt fit and proper Means that can be uſed, for the effecting of what he deſigns. And it is Preſumption in us to expect

expect he ſhould do otherwiſe. But *Faſting*, as we have ſeen already, is a very fit and proper Means, as of it ſelf conducing much to a vertuous and good Life. And therefore they who give themſelves to Faſting and Abſtinence, as they ought to do, are always in GOD's way, uſing the proper Means for the obtaining of true Grace and Vertue. And ſo need not doubt but he will beſtow it upon them. Whereas they who refuſe or neglect ſuch Means, have no more Ground to expect his Bleſſing and Aſſiſtance, than they have to expect that he ſhould work Miracles for them.

And beſides that, altho' the moſt high GOD, the chiefeſt, the only Good, be always ready, and free to communicate of himſelf, and to diſtribute the Graces of his Spirit, it is to thoſe who are rightly diſpoſed for the Receipt of them, whoſe Bodies as well as Souls are fitted for the Inhabitation of the Spirit, or as the Apoſtle words it, to be the *Temple of the Holy Ghoſt*. But certainly no Bodies are ſo fit and proper for ſo Divine a Gueſt, as thoſe which by Faſting and Abſtinence are kept in continual Subjection to the Soul. For it being the Soul that is primarily inſpired, and ſanctified by the Spirit, unleſs the Body be ſubject to the Soul, it will

not be subject to the Spirit that is in it, but the *Flesh will lust against the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 19. Whereas, if the Body be kept clean and pure, always at the Beck of the Soul, ready and willing to observe its Commands, then the Spirit that enlightens, actuates, and quickens the Soul, will with great Facility diffuse its Influences over the whole Man, so as to sanctify it throughout. For then the Body being subject to the Souls, and the Soul to the Spirit, as the Spirit is, so will the Soul and Body be in their Capacities pure and holy.

Hence it is, that the greatest Discoveries that GOD hath made of Himself to Men, and the most powerful Effects of the Spirit upon them, have usually been when they were Fasting, and so in a right Disposition for them. Thus *Moses was fasting forty days and forty nights*, even all the while that he was conversing with GOD upon Mount *Sinai*, and received the Law from Him. Exod. 34. 28. *Elias* had *fasted forty Days and forty Nights*, when GOD discoursed so familiarly with them upon Mount *Horeb*, 1 *King*. 19. 8. Our Lord himself also, tho' he had no need of it, his Body being always perfectly subject to his Soul, yet for our Example and Imitation, *fasted forty Days and forty Nights*, even all the while that He was in the Wilderness overcoming

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the Devil, and had the Angels to minister unto Him, *Matt.* 4. *Daniel* was *fasting* when the Angel *Gabriel* was sent to acquaint him with the precise Time of the *Messiah*'s coming; *Dan.* 9. *Cornelius*, by whose Conversion the Door of Salvation was open'd to the *Gentiles*, he was also *Fasting*, when the Angel was sent to instruct him how to get to Heaven, *Act.* 10. 30. And to name no more, in this very Place where my Text is, the Disciples at *Antioch* were *fasting*, when the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner spake unto them saying, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work to which I have called them.* By all which it appears, that when Men are *Fasting*, and so their Bodies are subject to their Souls, then GOD takes the Opportunity of manifesting himself and his Pleasure to them, and also directing and assisting them in the way to Bliss. And by consequence, that *Fasting* is a Duty of greater moment than it is commonly thought to be.

Now these things being premised concerning *Fasting* in general, it is easie to conclude, that it is very reasonable at least, if not necessary, to fast upon such Occasions as these. For seeing that Abstinence and Fasting conduceth so much to the suppressing of Vice, and to the Exer-

cise of Vertue, to the correcting the Errors of our Fancies, and the Disorder of our Passions, to the quickning and invigorating our Devotions, and so to the more effectual obtaining the good things we want and desire at the hands of GOD; it must needs be very requisite, that we and the whole Church joyn heartily and sincerely in it, when any Persons are to be admitted into Holy Orders, that so we may the more effectually implore the Grace and Favour of the All-wise GOD in guiding and governing the the Minds of His Servants, the Bishops and Pastors of His Flock, so that they may make choice of such Persons as He Himself knows to be fit to serve in the sacred Ministry of the Church, and in assisting those which which shall be ordain'd with His own Grace and Benediction, that both by their Life and Doctrine they may set forth His Glory, and set forward the Salvation of all Men, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.

And as for those who are to be ordained to any Holy Function, nothing certainly can be more necessary than for them to bring their Bodies by *Fasting* and *Abstinence* into a due Subjection to their Minds, that so they may be rightly prepar'd and disposed fot these great Blessings

ſings we pray for, and particularly for the receiving the Holy Ghoſt, which ſhall be conferr'd upon them at their Ordination. That there be no Obſtacle or Impediment in themſelves, but they may be ready both in Soul and Body, to receive not only Power and Authority to Adminiſter the Word and Sacraments, but likewiſe ſuch Aids and Aſſiſtances of the Holy Spirits, whereby they may be enabled to do it carefully, ſincerely, effectually.

And this ſeems to be the Reaſon, why the Diſciples here Faſted both before and at the Ordination of *Barnabas* and *Saul*. For before they ordained them or ſo much as had pitch'd upon whom to ordain, they faſted, for it is ſaid, *As they Miniſtred to the Lord and faſted, the Holy Ghoſt ſaid, ſeparate me Barnabas and Saul.* From whence it ſeems very probable, that the Church being very much enlarged, found it neceſſary at this time to encreaſe the Number of their Paſtors, and not knowing whom to chooſe, they ſet apart ſome time for Faſting and Prayer to Almighty GOD, that He would be pleaſed to direct them in it, who accordingly did ſo. For as they were thus *Miniſtring* to Him, and *Faſting, the Holy Ghoſt ſaid, ſeparate me Barnabas and Saul.* Now what they did then, we are now doing. It is upon

the ſame Account that we are now miniſtring to the Lord, and faſting. And altho' we have no Ground to expect any ſuch immediate Revelation as they had, yet if we do but perform this Duty as ſincerely as they did, there can be no doubt but that Almighty GOD will hear our Prayers as well as theirs, and direct the Biſhops and Paſtours of our Church, as he did them, to chooſe ſuch Perſons as he himſelf approves of, and would have ordain'd to the Miniſtry of His Church.

Neither did they think it enough to faſt before, in order to their making a good Choice of Perſons to be Ordain'd, but they faſted again at the very time when they Ordain'd theſe, which by the Direction of the Holy Ghoſt they had made choice of for the Purpoſes aforeſaid, even for the more effectual obtaining the Spirit for them, and for the better fitting and qualifying of them for the receiving of it; which therefore I humbly conceive is very convenient, if not neceſſary to be obſerv'd by us too.

But here we may further take notice, that as they faſted, ſo they pray'd too at the ſame time. Which two Duties are frequently put together. *Daniel* and *Cornelius* beforemention'd, were faſting and praying when the Angel came to them. Our

Lord

Lord tells, *There are ſome kind of Devils that cannot be caſt out but by Faſting and Praying.* And to come nearer to our preſent Purpoſe, *when St. Paul and Barnabas had ordain'd them Elders in every Church, and had faſted with Praying*, ſaith St. *Luke*, Acts 14. 23. From whence it appears that they ordained others after the ſame manner as they themſelves were ordain'd, even with Faſting and Praying. And doubtleſs, the ſame Courſe ought always to be taken in conferring Orders, not only for the Example of the Holy Apoſtles, tho' that would be ſufficient, but likewiſe from the Reaſon of the thing. For Faſting upon this Occaſion, is chiefly deſign'd for the fixing our Thoughts, for the exciting our Affections, and for the diſpoſing our Minds the better, to pray and ſupplicate the Divine Majeſty, for His Direction in the Choice of fit Perſons to be ordain'd, and for His Bleſſing upon them whom they have ordain'd to any holy Function. For which Purpoſe, no better Means can be uſed than Prayer joyned with Faſting. For tho' the effectual fervent Prayer of the Righteous, ofits ſelf availeth much, when it is joyn'd with Faſting, it availeth more. As our Lord himſelf plainly intimates in the Paſſage before cited, where he ſaith, That *ſuch Devils are not caſt out but by*

Prayer

Prayer and Faſting together. Some kind of Devils may be caſt out by Prayer without Faſting, but none can withſtand them when they go together. And the Reaſon ſeems to be, becauſe Faſting is not only of it ſelf acceptable to GOD, but alſo becauſe, by Faſting our Bodies being kept under, our Hearts will riſe higher, and our Minds be more intent, our Affections more pure, and our Deſires more earneſt, and by conſequence, our Prayers more effectual and prevalent with Almighty GOD, for His granting the good Things we pray for.

Eſpecially, they who are to be ordain'd, muſt be ſure not only to faſt, but to pray too. And as the Church prays for them, ſo they muſt pray for themſelves too, that GOD would vouchſafe to beſtow his Spirit upon them. And that He will do it if ſincerely deſir'd, we have the Word of Chriſt Himſelf for it, ſaying, *If ye then being evil, know how to give good things to your Children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Luke 11. 13. Which we ſee exactly verify'd in my Text, for *Saul* and *Barnabas* having faſted and prayed, and ſo receiv'd Impoſition of Hands, it preſently follows, that *they were ſent forth by the Holy Ghoſt*, which was con-

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ferr'd upon them by the Impoſition of Hands, according as they had pray'd it might.

But it is now time to apply what hath been ſaid upon this Subject in general, to you who are to be ordain'd, and whom it more particularly concerns. And therefore I ſhall now addreſs my ſelf wholly unto them.

Beloved Brethren,

I hope you are all ſenſible of the Greatneſs of that Office which you now deſire ſhou'd be conferr'd upon you, and by conſequence, of the Neceſſity that lies upon you to prepare your ſelves for it. And you have now heard how you ought to do that, even as the firſt Miniſters of the Goſpel did it, that is, by *Faſting* and *Prayer*. And therefore I would not have you look upon it as an unneceſſary Task and Burden impoſed upon you, to ſpend this, and other Days this Week in the Performance of theſe great Duties. For you ſee it is no more than what the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel did, and the Reaſon of the thing re quires from you, inſomuch, that you ſhou'd rather give Thanks to GOD, that you are put in mind to do thoſe things which are ſo neceſſary to the preparing and qualifying of you for the great Work you are now to undertake. Having there-

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fore ſo happy an Opportunity put into your Hands, let me adviſe and beſeech you to be as diligent and ſerious in the Uſe and Improvement of it. Devote this and the other Days ſet apart for Prayer and Faſting upon this Occaſion, wholly to your Performance of theſe great Duties they are ſet apart for. Think it not enough that you have the Prayers of other devout People for you, nor think it ſufficient that you your ſelves are here preſent this Morning, and joyn with us in the publick Prayers of the Church, neither yet think it ſufficient that you have heard ſomething of the Uſefulneſs and Neceſſity of Faſting and Praying, in order to the preparing your ſelves for Ordination; but act accordingly. Faſt and Pray in private as well as publick, that you may be worthy to receive the Holy Ghoſt. And in your private Devotions, I think it would do very well if you obſerv'd theſe few Rules.

1. If you have it not already, get the Form or Office of our Church according to which you are to be ordain'd. And conſider ſeriouſly what is there ſaid concerning the Dignity and the Difficulty of that Office which you are now to be admitted unto. And do not content your ſelves with reading over that excellent Exhortation and Inſtruction which is there given you, but

but weigh every Word and Sentence in it. For there is nothing in it but what highly concerns you to understand and remember, for it is supposed that you have well weighed and pondered those things before you go to be ordain'd: And that you have clearly determin'd to apply your selves wholly to that Office whereunto it pleaseth GOD to call you.

Having thus possessed your Minds with a due Sense of the Greatness and Excellency of that Work you are called to, and of the End and Design of your being call'd to it; in the next place, consider seriously the several Questions, which in the Name of GOD, and of his Church, shall be put to you, when you come to be ordain'd. And do not resolve to give those Answers to them which the Church requires, before you have considered whether you can really and in Conscience do it.

As for Example: The first Question propounded to those who shall be ordain'd *Deacons*, is this, *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve GOD for the promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of His Church?* Which certainly is a Question that you cannot easily answer, unless you have duly weighed it before-hand. And therefore in your private Retire-

Retirements, ſearch impartially into your own Hearts, and bethink your ſelves ſeriouſly, whether by the Providence of GOD, and the Aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, you are fitted and qualify'd for that Office, and ſincerely deſire to be admitted into it, for no other, or at leaſt no greater End or Purpoſe, than that you may promote GOD's Glory, and edifie his People. And if upon due Examination, you find it is really ſo with you, then you have as good Ground to truſt that you are moved to it by the Holy Ghoſt, as if he had expreſly commanded you to be ſeparated to the Work whereunto he hath called you, as he did here to *Barnabas* and *Saul*.

I ſhall not prevent your private Meditations by running over all the Queſtions here, but only deſire that you would all do it, every one by himſelf, and that you would deal plainly and faithfully with GOD and your own Conſciences in it. As conſidering that every Anſwer you there make in the Preſence of GOD, upon ſo ſolemn an Occaſion as that is, is, and ought to be accounted every jot as Sacred as any Oath whatever, and doth as much bind and oblige you to the Performance of what you there promiſe. And therefore ſuch Anſwers are not to be made raſhly, neither muſt you venture upon obliging your ſelves

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to GOD and his Church, by ſuch ſolemn Promiſes as theſe are, without mature Deliberation and ſincere Reſolutions to perform them, the Lord being your Helper.

And indeed by that time that you have duly weighed the Office you are to be admitted into, and the Promiſes you make when you are admitted into it, you will ſoon find how difficult, or rather impoſſible it will be to diſcharge the one or the other, without the ſpecial Grace and Aſſiſtance of GOD Himſelf. Which therefore you muſt be ſure to pray for in private as well as publick. For this is the other great and neceſſary Duty which is now incumbent upon you; and which you muſt perform with all the Serioufneſs, Vigour and Earneſtneſs that you poſſibly can: As knowing that both your own, and other Mens Salvation depends very much upon it. And, therefore when you are got into your Cloſets, where none ſees you but that GOD whoſe Miniſters you are now to be, make it your humble and hearty Requeſt to Him, that as he is pleas'd to confer this Office upon you, ſo He would vouchſafe you ſuch a Meaſure of His holy Spirit, whereby you may be enabled faithfully to execute the ſame according to His Will and your own Promiſe.

And

And if you thus ſincerely perform both your publick and private Devotions, and prepare your ſelves by Faſting and Prayer againſt the Time of your Ordination; as you need not, ſo you ought not to doubt but GOD will then hear your Prayers and beſtow his Spirit upon you, ſo was not only to authoriſe, but likewiſe to aſſiſt you in the adminiſtring His Word and Sacraments, and in the faithful Diſcharge of the Office he calls you to. For which purpoſe it is very expedient, that while the Biſhops Hands are upon your Heads, eſpecially when he ſaith in the Ordination of *Prieſts*, *Receive the Holy Ghoſt*, your Minds be fully intent upon Almighty GOD, and your Faith fixed upon the Promiſes that he hath made to that purpoſe in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. For then he will moſt certainly grant your Deſires, and you will receive the Holy Ghoſt for the effectual diſcharge of your Duty, both as Miniſters and Chriſtians, that you may both ſhew others the way to Bliſs, and walk in it your ſelves.

Having thus conſider'd how you ought to prepare your ſelves for your Ordination, and how to carry your ſelves at it; I muſt deſire you in the laſt place, to have a care of your ſelves afterwards too. For which Purpoſe, when you are ordained,

always

always keep it in your Minds, what Relation you then ſtand in to Chriſt, as being his Miniſters, the Stewards of the manifold Myſteries of GOD, and behave yourſelves accordingly. For remember that the efficacy of the Word and Sacraments Adminiſtred by you, depends not upon your ſmall Qualification, but upon Chriſt's Inſtitution, and his Promiſes annex'd to it. And therefore you may be Inſtruments in GOD's Hand for the ſaving of others, and yet you your ſelves may be damn'd.

This S^t *Paul* himſelf was very ſenſible of, and therefore ſaith, *I keep under my Body, and bring it into ſubjection, leſt by any means when I have preach'd unto others; I my ſelf ſhould be a Caſt-a-way.* 1 Cor. 9. 27. And what a ſad thing would it be, that others ſhould be brought to Heaven by your means, and yet you your ſelves ſhut out? For the preventing whereof, I would adviſe you to take this courſe.

1. Do as S^t *Paul* did, *keep your Body under and bring it into Subjection, by Faſting and Abſtinence.* Which is every whit as neceſſary after you are Ordained, to the execution of your Office, as it was before in order to your admiſſion into it. And not only to the due execution of your Office, but likewiſe to your performance of all

other Duties that are required of you, in order to your Eternal Salvation. For if ſo eminent a Saint, ſo great an Apoſtle as S^t *Paul*, was forc'd to keep his Body under, leſt after all his care and pains in ſhewing others the way to Heaven, he himſelf ſhould miſs of it; ſure you and I had need to Faſt and Pray to purpoſe, leſt when we have ſpent our Days in adminiſtring the Word and Sacraments for the Salvation of others; we our ſelves ſhould periſh everlaſtingly.

Moreover, that you may never forget the Duties which your great Maſter Chriſt requires of you, nor yet the Promiſes you made to him when you were Ordain'd, it would be very well, if you would often, eſpecially upon *Faſting-Days*, read over the Offices for making or ordering Prieſts and Deacons, and conſider what Queſtions were then propounded to you, and how you anſwer'd them. I need not tell you what Advantage this would be to you. Do but make tryal of it, and you yourſelves will find it by your own Experience.

Another thing that I would mind you of, is this, that although your Ordination reſpect not the Church of *England* in particular, but Chriſt's Holy Catholick Church, ſo that when ordain'd Prieſts or Deacons here, you are ſo all the World over; yet ſo long as

as you continue to execute your Office in our Church, be ſure to obſerve punctually the Orders and Conſtitutions of it; which as it is your Duty, in obedience to the Church you live in, ſo you will find it to be your Intereſt too. For our Church hath taken care that all the means of Grace and Salvation ſhould be duly adminiſtred to all that live in her Communion. And you will be now in the number of thoſe to whom the Adminiſtration of them is committed. If you therefore keep cloſe to the Rules that ſhe hath ſet you in it, it will eaſe you of a great deal of care and trouble, for you need look no further, for the full diſcharging the truſt repoſed in you; for by this means you will diſcharge it faithfully, and will be found to have done ſo, when you come to ſtand before our Lord's Tribunal at the laſt Day. Whereas, if you, thro' carefulneſs or Self-merit, ſhall neglect, diminiſh or alter any thing that the Church out of Obedience to Chriſt's Commands, hath provided for the Salvation of thoſe committed to your Charge, and any of them by that means periſh, their Blood will be required at your Hands.

And then, *Laſtly*. As Chriſt is pleaſed to honour you ſo far as to admit you into his own Miniſtry, endeavour all ye can to adorn it with an Holy and Good Life.

Adjuſt your Actions all to the Rules that he hath preſcribed in His Holy Goſpel. Live above the World, and make it your conſtant, your only care and ſtudy and buſineſs, to ſerve and honour and obey your Great Lord and Maſter in Heaven. In ſhort, *as he who hath called you is Holy, ſo be ye Holy in all manner of Converſation:* That ſo you may ſhew your Flock the way to Heaven, both by your Precept and Example. Do this and you will ſave yourſelves as well as them that hear you. *Which* GOD *of His Infinite Mercy grant we may all do, through Jeſus our Lord; To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour and Glory, Now and for Ever.*

SER-

SERMON X.

1 THESS. ii. 13.

For this Cauſe alſo thank we GOD *without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the Word of* GOD *which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of Men, but, as it is in Truth, the Word of* GOD, *which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe.*

IN *you that believe*; There lies the Emphaſis, and the Foundation of all that I deſign at preſent to build upon theſe Words. S^t *Paul* having been at *Theſſalonica*, and preached the Word of GOD to the Inhabitants of that City; many of them hearkened to what he ſaid, not as ſpoken by a Philoſopher, but by an Apoſtle ſent from GOD, and therefore receiv'd it, not as the Word of Men, which may or may not be true, but as it really was, the infallible Word of GOD Himſelf. For this the Apoſtle here tells them, *he thanked* GOD

without ceasing, ascribing it wholly to his Power and Goodness: And puts them withal in mind of two Things; *first*, of the great Force and Efficacy which the Word they so received had upon them. *The Word of GOD*, saith he, *which effectually worketh in you.* It had, it seems, its whole Effect, its End, its perfect Work upon them, insomuch that, as he saith in the following Words, *they were now able to suffer as much for the Sake of Christ, as the Churches in* Judea *did.* And then, *secondly*, he acquaints them also how the Word of GOD came to have so much Power upon them, even because they believ'd it; *which effectually worketh*, saith he, *in you that believe*; In you, and none else, and in you only as believing it, without which they could not have been wrought upon, nor would have received any Benefit at all by it. According to that also of the Apostle to the *Heb.* where speaking of the Gospel preached to the *Jews* under the Law, he saith, *The Word Preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it*, *Heb.* 4. 2. But the Apostle in my Text speaks only in the present Tense, ὃς ἐνεργεῖται, which effectually worketh, not which wrought only when ye heard it, but doth so now, ἐν ὑμῖν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, in you believing, or that do believe. As if he had

had ſaid; Seeing you ſtill believe the Word you heard, it ſtill continues to work effectually in you.

I have been the more particular in explaining the Words to you, that you may better ſee into the Ground of what I would obſerve from them, which is, that the Efficacy of GOD's Holy Word upon our Minds depends upon our believing it; that whatſoever we hear, can make no Impreſſions at all upon us, unleſs we believe it, nor any longer than we do believe it. But ſo long as we continue to believe what is preached to us out of GOD's Word, ſo long it will work effectually in us, towards the bringing us out of Darkneſs into Light, from the Power of Satan unto GOD.

The Underſtanding of this will be of great Uſe to ſhew, both where the Fault lies, that ſo many in our Age are no better for having the Word of GOD ſo often preached to them, and alſo how we may be always the better for it? For which Purpoſe therefore we ſhall *firſt* conſider, what we are to underſtand by the Word of GOD, and *then* what by believing it.

By the Word of GOD, we are to underſtand the whole Syſtem of Divine Revelations, as they are now contained in the Books of the Old and New Teſtament, *for all Scripture being given by Inſpiration of* GOD,

GOD. 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. It is all, one part as well as another, equally the Word of GOD: So that we have the Word of GOD Himself, that whatsoever is there commanded or forbidden, it is his Will that we should or should not do it; that whatsoever is there threaned against impenitent Sinners, or promised to the Penitent, He Himself will see it fulfill'd; that whatsoever is there recorded to be said or done, was accordingly said or done, just as it is there recorded; that whatsoever is there foretold, shall certainly come to pass. And that whatsoever is there affirmed, is infallibly true, as being affirmed by him who cannot lye. And by our believing all this, we are to understand, our being fully perswaded of the Truth and Certainty of it, in a manner suitable to the Ground that we have for it, even the Word of GOD Himself, which being the firmest Ground we can have for any thing in the World, we ought to be perswaded in the highest manner that can be, of every thing that is there written.

This being premised in general, it will be easie to demonstrate the Truth of this Proposition, that the Word of GOD, howsoever it is preached or made known, *effectually worketh in them that believe it.* For we find by constant Experience, that a firm

Belief

Belief or full Perſwaſion of any thing, even in this World, hath that Power over our Minds, that it carrieth all our Affections after it. If we really believe a thing to be good for us, we cannot but love it, and deſire it, and labour after it, and be glad when we have got it. If we really believe a thing to be evil or hurtful to us, we cannot but hate it, and abhor it, and ſhun it, and be troubled when it falls upon us. And this, altho' this our Belief or Perſwaſion be grounded only upon our own Fancies, or corrupt Reaſon, or upon the Teſtimony of our Fellow-Creatures upon Earth. How much more, when it is grounded upon the Teſtimony of GOD Himſelf? *If we receive the Witneſs of Men, the Witneſs of GOD is Greater*, 1 John 5. 9. It is indeed the greateſt that can be in the World. And therefore ſuch things as GOD Himſelf hath atteſted, and we accordingly believe as we ought upon his Teſtimony or Witneſs, muſt needs prevail the moſt powerfully upon us, and work the moſt effectually in us, that it is poſſible for any thing in the World to do.

To make this the more plain and eaſie to be underſtood, I ſhall briefly run through the ſeveral Parts of GOD's Holy Word, and ſhew how each of them operates upon a believing Mind. Now all that is there writ-

written, may be reduced to these few Heads, Commands, Threatnings, Promises, Histories, Predictions and Affirmations. Every one of which hath its proper and peculiar Way of working upon the Minds of Men, but they all do it effectually in those which believe.

By the Commands, I mean all such Moral Laws and Precepts which are recorded in Holy Scripture, as enacted by GOD Himself, or, which is the same, by his Holy Spirit in the Prophets and Apostles. All which Laws have equally their Authority and Sanction from the Supreme Law-giver, the universal Governour of the World, who hath been pleased to make and publish them, that all Mankind might know how to govern themselves, their Thoughts, their Words, and their Actions, all according to his Divine Will and Pleasure. Now when we read or hear of any of these Commandments, if at the same time we firmly believe and are fully perswaded in our Minds, that they are prescribed to us by the Almighty Creator, Preserver and Disposer of all things in the World, our Consciences must needs be touched, and our Hearts affected with a quick Sense of the many Obligations that lie upon us to observe them, with an holy Fear lest we should ever break them, and with steady Resolutions to keep them as

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punctually as we can. As we see in the Children of *Israel*, when the Law was proclaimed upon Mount *Sinai* with Thundrings and Lightnings, and other Demonstrations of the Divine Glory and Greatness, whereby the People were convinced, that it was indeed the Law of GOD, and that he himself proclaimed it; how were they terrified at it, and resolved to keep it! They desired to see no more such terrible Sights, but were ready now to do whatsoever *Moses* should tell them was the Will of GOD. For they said to him, *Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our* GOD *shall say. And speak thou unto us all that the Lord our* GOD *shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it*, Deut. 5. 27. So effectually did the Word of GOD work in them, so long as they believed it. And so it doth in all that hear of the Laws of GOD, so long as they really believe them to be his. As all the Moral Commandments are, which we find written in the Holy Scriptures, altho' they were not promulged in such an extraordinary and astonishing Manner, as the Ten were upon Mount *Sinai*, but by the still Voice of his Holy Spirit in the Prophets: They are all equally the Commands of Almighty GOD. Which whosoever believes, when he hears them deliver'd and made

known to him, he must needs receive them with that Reverence and Godly Fear, that will work up his Mind into fervent Desires, and sincere Endeavours to observe and keep them. Insomuch that he who is not so wrought upon by them, may be confident, that whatsoever he may think or say, he is not fully perswaded that they are the Laws of the Supreme Judge and Governour of the World. If he was, he would soon find them working effectually in him.

Especially if he considers withal, the Penalty which GOD hath threatned against those who break his Laws, nothing less than Death it self. When GOD commanded *Adam* not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, he told him at the same time, *that in the day that he eat thereof, he should surely die*, Gen. 2. 17. Which if *Adam* had believed, he would never have eaten of that Tree. And therefore the Serpent had no other way to prevail with him to do it, but by perswading him that *he should not die*, Gen. 3. 4. So it is to this Day. In that GOD was pleas'd to threaten the first Sin with Death, he thereby sufficiently declared that all Sin should be punish'd with *Death*, which the Apostle therefore saith, *is the wages of Sin*, Rom. 6. 23. of Sin in general, on as well as another. GOD hath threatned

ned Death againſt every Sin, Death in its fulleſt Extent and Latitude, as crompri-zing under it, all the Curſes and Miſeries that Mankind is capable of. Hence it is that he denounced ſo many Curſes, againſt thoſe *who would not obſerve to do whatſo-ever he had commanded*, Deut. 28. And how exactly they were all executed upon the Children of *Iſrael*, may eaſily appear to any one that compares what *Moſes* hath there written, with what *Joſephus* hath re-corded concerning the Deſtruction of *Hie-ruſalem* by the *Romans*, in his Hiſtory of the *Jewiſh* War; where we find all the Curſes which are there threatned, ſo lite-rally fulfill'd upon that Sinful Nation, that it may ſerve as a Comment upon the foreſaid Text. And howſoever other Peo-ple may flatter themſelves for a while with the hopes of impunity for their Sins, not-withſtanding that they continue in them, the Curſe of GOD will moſt certainly one time or other fall upon them for it: Nay, it is upon them already. For GOD hath ſaid, *Curſed is every one that continu-eth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them*, Gal. 3. 10. Deut. 27. 26. They are already curſed, whether they ſee it or no; and they ſhall find they are ſo whether they will or no, when Chriſt ſhall ſay to them, *Depart from*

me.

me, ye Curſed, into everlaſting Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels, Matth. 25.41. For this we have the Word of GOD himſelf, which if Men did really believe, how effectually would it work in them! It would ſoon turn their Stomachs againſt all manner of Sin, as that which brings the Curſe of GOD upon them, and ſo is the only Cauſe of all the Troubles they meet with in this World, and without ſincere Repentance will ruine and deſtroy them for ever.

The ſame may be ſaid of the Promiſes which GOD hath made to thoſe who keep his Laws, which are ſo many and ſo great, that if Men did but really believe them, they would need no other Arguments to perſwade them to do whatſoever he hath commanded. For to thoſe who do ſo, he hath promiſed all the Good, all the beſt Things, yea, all Things that are in the World: *All ſhall be theirs*, 1 Cor. 3. 21. *And all ſhall work together for their Good.* Rom. 8. 28. And who can forbear to do that which he believes will do him good, altho' it be only one particular Good, and altho' he hath no other Ground to believe it, but becauſe a wiſe and an honeſt Man, as he ſuppoſes, hath told him ſo? How much more, when the All-wiſe, Almighty, All-good and gracious GOD hath

ſaid,

ſaid, that *they who obey and ſerve Him, ſhall have all the good Things they can deſire*, as we have all the ground that can be to believe it; ſo no Man can really believe it, but he muſt needs ſtrive all he can to obey and ſerve Him, which whoſoever doth not do, whatſoever he may pretend, I am ſure he doth not truly believe GOD's Word. For *true Faith worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6. But *Love is the fulfilling of the* whole *Law*, Rom. 13. 10. Gal. 5. 14. And therefore he that doth not endeavour to the utmoſt of his Power to fulfil the whole Law of GOD, may be confident that he doth not truly believe his Word, and Promiſe to them that do ſo. And that is the Reaſon, the only Reaſon, that it hath no effect upon him.

But in thoſe who believe, it works ſo effectually, that it puts them upon conſtant endeavours to do whatſoever GOD hath commanded; it inſpires them with Courage and Reſolution in it; it keeps them *ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, foraſmuch as they know that their Labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. They know, they are ſure that all the Pains they take for him will turn to good Account for themſelves. They have GOD's Word for it;

it; the beſt ſecurity in the World. And therefore they never think that they can lay out too much upon it.

And as the Word and Promiſe of GOD animates and encourageth thoſe who believe, to obey him in all Things which he hath commanded; ſo it enables them alſo to put their whole Truſt and Confidence on Him for all Things that He hath promiſed, that is, for all things that can any way conduce to their good and welfare. By which means, whatſoever happens, their Hearts are always fixed, truſting in the Lord, to defend and keep them, according to his Word, which they are confident can never fail. As we ſee in the Apoſtle, GOD hath ſaid; *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee*: So that we may boldly ſay; *the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what Man ſhall do unto me*, Heb. 13. 5, 6. So in all the Promiſes which GOD hath made, they who believe, can boldly ſay that He will make them good. This is that Faith which is ſo acceptable to GOD, that by it we are accepted of as Righteous before Him, through His beloved Son, in whom all his Promiſes are made and confirmed to us. As when GOD had made a Promiſe to *Abraham*, it is ſaid, *Abraham believed GOD, and it was counted to him for Righteouſneſs*,

neſs, Rom. 4. 5. Not that we can believe, and not do the Works of GOD, as I have already ſhewn; but becauſe when we have done all we can, our Works are ſo imperfect, that we cannot be accounted Righteous for them: And therefore GOD is Graciouſly pleas'd to accept of our Faith in his Promiſes, and in his Son in whom they are made; and to count that for Righteouſneſs to us, in that we are thereby intereſted in all the Merits of our Bleſſed Saviour, in whom we believe, and by whom we are therefore juſtified before GOD. So effectually do the Promiſes of GOD work in them who believe and truſt on them, that they are thereby both made and accounted Righteous, and ſo are meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

Neither doth the Hiſtorical Part of the Holy Scriptures, want its Influence and Energy in thoſe who receive it as atteſted by GOD Himſelf, and accordingly believe it. When we read there how GOD made the World, and what great Things he hath ſince done in it, if we really believe it; we muſt needs be ſtruck with ſuch an admiration of his Infinite Wiſdom and Power, as will make us fall down and worſhip Him; when we read or hear of the dreadful Judgments which he hath

inflicted upon obstinate and notorious Sinners; if we really believe it, we cannot but dread the Thoughts of falling under his Displeasure, and so live in his fear all our Life-long: When we read or hear of the great Deliverances he hath wrought, and the wonderful Works that he hath done for his faithful People and Servants in all Ages; if we really believe it, we shall be thereby inflamed with Holy Desires, to be in the number of his Faithful Servants, and encouraged to trust on him, and to hope that he will do as much for us, if there be occasion. When we read or hear of the great Sins which the best of Men have sometimes fallen into; if we really believe it, our Hearts must needs be touched with the Conscience of our own Infirmities, and of the necessity of observing what the Apostle hath taught us in that Case; *Be not high-minded but fear*, Rom. 11. 20. When we read or hear of the great Troubles and Afflictions which GOD's own People have met with in this World; if we really believe it, we shall the more chearfully undergo whatsoever he shall be pleased to lay upon us, and with *Moses*, *choose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of* GOD, *than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season*, Heb. 11. 25. When we read or hear of

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the Vertues and good Works, for which the Saints of old are commended by GOD himself, as that *Enoch* walked with GOD, That *Noah* was a just Man, and perfect in his Generation; That *Abraham* was strong in Faith, giving Glory unto GOD; That *Job* was not only patient, but thankful for all his troubles; That *Moses* was the meekest Man upon Earth, That *David* was a Man after GOD's own Heart, That *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth* were both Righteous before GOD, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless, and the like; if we really believe it, what an Emulation will it raise in us to come as near them as possibly we can? Especially the Life and Death of our Blessed Saviour, who did none, and yet suffer'd all manner of Evil; if we really believe it, it would not only make us ashamed of our former Sins, but careful for the future to walk in his steps.

But as to what is recorded concerning our Blessed Saviour, I shall have occasion to speak more particularly of that afterwards, as likewise of the Prophesies or Prædictions that are not yet fulfilled. Wherefore passing by these which are fulfilled already, and so are a great Confirmation of our Faith in GOD's Word; I shall haste to the last of these Heads, to which I said, whatso-

ever is contain'd in it, may be referr'd, which I called Affirmations. By which I mean, whatsoever is affirm'd in the Holy Scriptures concerning GOD, the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost, or any other Truth that is there Revealed on purpose that we might believe it: For whatsoever is so affirmed, if we accordingly believe it, it will work so effectually in us, as to cleanse our Hearts from all erroneous and corrupt Opinions, and fill them with a due sense and right Notions of Divine things, according to that of St. *Peter* where he saith, that *GOD purified their Hearts by Faith*, Act. 15. 9.

To make this as plain and practical as I can, that ye may not only understand but experience in your selves what Power this part of GOD's Holy Word hath upon them who believe, I shall briefly run through the Articles of our Christian Faith, as they are contained in the Apostles Creed, and shew how every one hath its particular influence, and all work together to cleanse and purify the Hearts of those who believe, to take them off from all gross and sensible Objects, and to fix them upon GOD, and the concerns of another Life. I know there are other Great Truths revealed in the Holy Scriptures which are not expressly named in that Creed. But I shall instance only in those that are there expressed: Because that

is the Creed which I ſuppoſe you can all ſay, you all profeſs to believe it, and it is that which we repeat every Day in our Publick Devotions. And therefore it will be of great uſe to underſtand how you ought to be, and how you will be affected with every Article that is in it, if you actually believe it, whenſoever ye hear or ſay it. And by Conſequence how proper it is to repeat and exerciſe our Faith upon that Creed in our Daily Prayers.

Firſt therefore, *He that cometh unto GOD, muſt believe that He is*, Heb. 11.6. and accordingly our Creed begins with, *I believe in GOD the Father Almighty: In GOD*, the Lord, the Lord of Hoſts, Jehovah, Jah, Being, Glory, Goodneſs, Purity, Excellency, Superexcellency, Perfection itſelf, exiſting in and of Himſelf, GOD bleſſed for ever. And who can believe there is ſuch a glorious, amiable, infinite, incomprehenſible, eternal Being, and not love and honour Him? Who can believe in Him, and not adore and ſerve Him with Reverence and Godly Fear? It is impoſſible. Such a Belief of GOD would raiſe up our Hearts, and incline all the Powers of our Souls to Him, and fix them ſo firmly upon Him, that nothing would be able to withdraw them from Him. And if we believe in GOD the Fa-

ther, we muſt needs believe he hath a *Son*, eternally begotten of Him, otherwiſe He could not be the Father, which by conſequence muſt needs work ſo effectually in us, as to confirm and ſettle us in the Belief of the Divinity of our Bleſſed Saviour, and of the moſt glorious Trinity, the Foundation of our whole Religion, and of all our Hopes and Expectations from it. But if we believe alſo that this GOD the Father is Almighty, that He can do whatſoever He pleaſeth, whenſoever, whereſoever, and howſoever He pleaſeth to do it; that nothing can reſiſt His Will, all things being infinitely below Him, and entirely ſubject to Him: Who can imagine, but they who feel it, what Impreſſions ſuch a Faith would make upon our Hearts? It would cut us to the Quick with Fear of offending, and with Deſires of pleaſing GOD Almighty above all things in the World, as believing that nothing can do us either good or hurt, but juſt as he pleaſeth. Eſpecially if we go on to believe, that this *GOD the Father Almighty, is the Maker of Heaven and Earth:* That He made the Sun, the Moon, and all the Planets and fixed Stars, with every thing that is in them, upon them, about them, above them or beyond them, farther than our very Thoughts can reach: That He made the Heaven of Heavens,

vens, with all the Angels, Arch-Angels, Cherubim and Seraphim, and all the Pure and Spotless, Glorious and most perfect Creatures that reside there; That He made the Earth, and the Sea, with all things that are therein: And that He did not only thus make all things at first, but he is still, He is always the Maker of them, continually upholding them in their Being, ordering, and disposing, and governing them, as he Himself sees good. Who can believe this, and not admire the Glory of that infinite Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness that shineth forth in the whole Creation? Who can believe this and not cry out, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were created*, Rev. 4. 11. *Allelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, let us rejoyce and be glad, and give Honour to Him*, Rev. 19. 6, 7. *For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things, to whom be Glory for ever*, Amen, *Rom.* 11. 36. And as we *believe in GOD the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth*, so also *in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord:* That He is Jesus, that is, as the Name imports, the Saviour, the only Saviour we have in all the World; That this Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed of GOD, to be a *Priest*, a *Prophet*,

phet, and a *King*, in order to his accomplishing our Salvation: That this Jesus Christ is the only Son of GOD, the Only-Begotten of the Father, of the same Nature and Substance with Him: And that He is the Lord of the whole World, and in a particular manner our Lord and Governour. Could we live with a constant Belief of all this, how happy should we then be? Then we should put our whole Trust and Confidence in Jesus, and in Him alone, for all things necessary for our Salvation: Then we should apply ourselves to Christ upon all Occasions, as our *Priest, to make Atonement for us*; *as our Prophet, to instruct us*; and as *our King, to defend and govern us*: Then the only Son of GOD would be our only Joy and Comfort, so that our *Souls would* always *magnifie the Lord, and our Spirits rejoice in God our Saviour*: Then we should submit unto the Will of Christ our Lord, and strive above all things, to serve, and please and obey him, and so should always live under his Conduct and Protection.

Who, as it follows in the Creed, *was conceiv'd by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary*; that is, who being in the Form of GOD, took upon him the Form of a Servant, or became Man too, by being conceiv'd, not in the ordinary way as other Men

Men are, but by the Holy Ghoſt Himſelf, and born as miraculouſly of a pure Virgin, the Virgin *Mary*, of the Stock of *David*; ſo that both his Conception and Birth was ſupernatural and miraculous, as being effected by the immediate Power of GOD Himſelf. Which is ſuch an Article of our Faith, that if firmly believed, it would make us aſtoniſhed at the infinite Love of GOD to Mankind, that He himſelf ſhou'd become Man, and for that Purpoſe, alter the whole Courſe of Natural Cauſes which He hath ſettled in the World, and all to reconcile Himſelf to Mankind, and Mankind unto Himſelf. Who can believe this, and not love that GOD who ſo loved us, as to be conceived by his own Holy Spirit, and born of a Virgin, and all to redeem and ſave us?

But how did this wonderful Perſon, this GOD-Man, redeem and ſave us? That we are taught in the next Words of the Creed, He *ſuffer'd under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, He deſcended into Hell.* He ſuffer'd all the Puniſhments which the Law of GOD had threatned againſt the Sins of Men. He ſuffer'd Shame and Reproach in His glorious Name; He ſuffer'd Pain and Anguiſh in his Body; He ſuffer'd Grief and Sorrow in His Soul; this He ſuffer'd under *Pontius Pilate*, a Roman

man Governour, and therefore suffer'd also that cruel and accursed Death which the *Romans* inflicted upon notorious Malefactors; He was crucified, His Hands and Feet were nailed to a Cross, and there he hung till he gave up the Ghost and died, and so offer'd up himself as a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World; and being dead, his Body was buried or laid in the Grave, and his Soul went down to Hell, not to suffer there, but to shew that he had suffer'd enough already, and that the Gates of Hell could have no more Power over him, or his. For he had now overcome the Devil, and therefore triumphed over him in his own Kingdom.

Is it possible really to believe all this, and yet not be affected with it? To believe that the Only-begotten Son of GOD, suffer'd so much for our Sins, and yet continue in them? To believe that he was crucified for us, and yet we not *crucifie our Flesh with the Affections and Lusts?* To believe that he died in our stead, and yet not live to his Honour and Glory? To believe that he was buried, and yet we not be *buried with him by Baptism into Death?* Rom. 6. 4. To believe that he went down into Hell, and yet that we should walk in the ways that lead thither? That he hath overcome the Devil, and yet we

should

ſhould be overcome by him? It is impoſſible. Men may talk of what Chriſt ſuffered, and profeſs to believe it, and yet be never the better for it; but if they did what they profeſs, if they really believed that ſuch an extraordinary Perſon ſuffered in ſuch an extraordinary manner for Sin, yea, and for their Sins too, it muſt needs work in them true Repentance, not to be repented of. So as to make them not only aſhamed of their former Sins, and heartily ſorry for them, but ſtedfaſtly reſolved to walk for the future in Newneſs of Life. They would never think they can do enough for him, who hath done and ſuffer'd ſo much for them.

But what ſaith our bleſſed Lord in *David*; *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither will thou ſuffer thine holy one to ſee Corruption*, Pſal. 16. 10. Acts 2. 31. And accordingly, though he was *crucified, dead* and *Buried*, and *went down into Hell*, yet as it follows in the Creed, *the third Day he roſe again from the Dead, aſcended into Heaven, ſitteth on the right Hand of* GOD *the Father Almighty, from thence he ſhall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.* We heard before how low Chriſt humbled himſelf for us, and here we ſee how highly he is now exalted by the Father, and all for us too. The third Day after his Soul

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and Body were ſeparated upon the Croſs, they were united together again, and ſo He revived or roſe again to Life, and ſoon after went up in both ſo united into Heaven, and was there ſet *at the right Hand of* GOD, *Angels, and Authorities and Powers being made ſubject to him*, 1 Pet. 3. 22. Neither was he only thus ſet at the right Hand of GOD, at his firſt going into Heaven, but as it is in the Creed, He ſitteth there now, as *Head over all things to the Church*, Epheſ. 1. 22. As King of Kings and Lord of Lords, veſted with abſolute Authority over the whole Creation, and as the true High-Prieſt, appearing in the Preſence of GOD, making Atonement and Reconciliation for all that believe in Him, by vertue of that Blood which he ſhed for the Sins of the whole World, when He was upon Earth. And that ſeems to be the Reaſon why in the *Revelations* He is all along repreſented as a Lamb ſitting upon His Throne, becauſe He ſits there as the Lamb that offer'd up himſelf for the Sins of the World, and by vertue of that one Oblation of Himſelf once offer'd, he is continually propitiating or reconciling his Father, and ſo interceding with Him for all his faithful People, that their Sins may be pardoned, and their Perſons accepted of, or accounted Righteous before GOD.

GOD. This he always did, is ſtill doing at this verv Moment, and ſo will be to the End of the World : When He will come to Earth again, and ſummon all Mankind that ever lived, together with thoſe which ſhall be then alive, to appear before Him, and will paſs his final Sentence upon every one, *according to that He hath done in the Body, whether it be good or evil*, 2 Cor. 5. 10.

I hope I need not tell you, that if ye believed all this, it would work effectually in you, you could not ſurely but feel it in yourſelves. For, I ſpeak to them who believe, did not your Hearts even burn within you, while you heard what a glorious Saviour ye have in Heaven? Did not your Souls leap for joy, that ye have ſuch an Advocate ever living to make Interceſſion for you? Do not you ſtill find your ſelves refreſhed and cheered at the hearing, that he who loved you ſo well as to lay down his Life for you, is now at the Right Hand of GOD, and hath all things in Heaven and Earth entirely at his Command. Hath it not made you ready to Praiſe and Magnifie his Name, and to joyn with the Choir of Heaven in ſinging, *Bleſſing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that ſitteth upon the Throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever?* Rev. 5. 13.

5. 13. And when you heard that this glorious Perſon will come one day to judge all Mankind, and you among the reſt, did not this ſtir up in you good Deſires and holy Reſolutions to prepare your ſelves for that great Account you muſt then give to him? If you found no ſuch Effect in your ſelves upon the hearing of theſe Fundamental Articles of our Religion, you may conclude, that you do not believe them: For if you did, you would not only have felt all that I have ſaid, but far more than I am able to expreſs.

The ſame may be ſaid of all the other Articles which remain. If you believed *in the Holy Ghoſt*, the Lord, and the Giver of Life, and of all Grace and Holineſs, you could never hear of Him, but you would immediately lift up your Hearts to him, to to be quickened, and ſanctified, or made holy by him. If you believed *the holy Catholick Church*, or the Congregation of all Chriſtian People, without which there is no Salvation, according to that of the Apoſtle, *The Lord added to the Church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved*, Acts 2. 47. If you believed this, I ſay, you could never hear of Chriſt's Church, but it would fill your Hearts with Joy and Thankfulneſs to GOD, that you are admitted into it, and ſtrengthen your Reſolutions of living ſo as

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that you may be ſaved in it. If you believ'd *the Communion of Saints*; that there is a Society or Company of Perſons in the World, which GOD himſelf is pleaſed to account real Saints, his own faithful Servants, his Elect and peculiar People, which he hath a ſpecial Love for, and takes particular Care of, both in this World and the next: Did you believe this, whenſoever you hear of it, it would put you upon longing and ſtriving all ye can to be in the Number of thoſe bleſſed Souls, *Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of* GOD, Epheſ. 2. 19. and ſo *meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, Col. 1. 12.

If you believed *the Forgiveneſs of Sins*, That upon your Repentance and Converſion unto GOD, your Sins will be all pardon'd by the Blood of Chriſt; every time you hear of it, it would work more and more upon you, to turn you from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto GOD, *that ye may receive this Forgiveneſs of Sins, and Inheritance among them which are ſanctified by Faith, that is in Chriſt Jeſus!* Acts 26. 18.

If you believed *the Reſurrection of the Body*, that altho' your Bodies muſt return to the Earth out of which they were taken, yet they ſhall be raiſed up again to ſtand

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before Christ's Tribunal, whensoever you hear of it, it would make you more careful to live in your Bodies so, as that ye may not be afraid, either to lay them down, or take them up again.

And as for *Life everlasting*, if you really believ'd that *the Wicked shall go into everlasting Punishment, and the Righteous into Life eternal*, Matth. 25. 46. What a mighty Change would it make in you, whensoever you hear of it? It wou'd make you dread the Thoughts of continuing in a State of Wickedness, and resolve for the future, to devote your selves wholly to the Service of Almighty GOD, that when you go out of this wicked and naughty World, you may live with Christ and his holy Angels in perfect Glory and Happiness for ever.

Thus effectually do the plain Articles of our Religion work upon them that believe. And so doth the whole Word of GOD. As I doubt not but many here present have found by their own Experience, who when they have heard any part of it revealed to them, upon their believing and receiving it, as it is in truth the Word of GOD, they have felt it to be, as the Apostle saith, *quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts*

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and Marrow, and a Diſcerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, Heb. 4. 12. It comes upon them like Fire upon Tinder, or ſuch combuſtible Matter, where it immediately catcheth and ſpreadeth itſelf all over it. Whereas, upon thoſe who do not believe, it falls like a Spark into Water; it is no ſooner there, but it is out. And that is the great Reaſon why ſo many hear the Word of GOD, and yet are never the better for it; becauſe, whatſoever they may profeſs, they are not fully perſwaded of it, they do not really believe it, with ſuch a Faith as is due to the infallible Word and Teſtimony of GOD himſelf: No, not ſo much as they believe what they ſee or hear, or is told them by fallible Men. And then it is no Wonder that it makes no Impreſſion upon them. It is impoſſible it ſhould, both from the Nature of the thing itſelf, and from the juſt Judgment of GOD upon them, for not believing what he himſelf hath ſaid.

But let others do what they pleaſe. Let us do what we profeſs; even believe whatſoever GOD hath revealed to us in his holy Word; that whenſoever we hear, or ſo much as think of it, his Grace may ſet it home upon our Hearts, and make it work effectually in us; that it may be always *profitable* to us *for Doctrine, for Reproof, for*

Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, that we may be perfect, throughly furniſh'd unto all good Works, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. And for that Purpoſe, let us be always thinking of GOD's Word, and ruminate by Faith ſo long upon it, that it may be digeſted into proper Food and Nouriſhment for our Souls, that we may *grow thereby in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. That whilſt others live only by Senſe, or Fancy, or at the beſt, by corrupt and carnal Reaſon, ſo as to be mov'd and acted only by them in every thing they do, we may for the future live by the Faith of the Son of GOD, and with a conſtant Belief of thoſe great Truths which he hath revealed to us, as the great Principle of our Life and Actions.

What Holy and Heavenly Lives ſhou'd we then live? Then we ſhou'd repent of all our Sins, becauſe it is written in GOD's Word, That *except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh*, Luke 13. 3, 5. Then we ſhou'd take care of every thing we do, becauſe it is written, GOD *will bring every Work into Judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*, Eccleſ. 12. 14. Then we ſhould refrain, not only from prophane, but idle Talk, becauſe it is written, That *every*

idle word that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment, Matth. 12. 36. Then we ſhould be humble and lowly in our own Eyes, becauſe it is written, *GOD reſiſteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble*, 1 Pet. 5.5. Then we ſhould ſtrive all we can to walk in all the Commandments of the LORD blameleſs, becauſe it is written, *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him*, John 14. 21. Then we ſhould love the World no longer, becauſe it is written, *If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him*, 1 John 2. 15. Then we ſhould never forſake the Aſſembling ourſelves together, but ſhould take all Opportunities of joyning in the Publick Worſhip of GOD, becauſe it is written, *Where two or three are met together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them*, Matth. 18. 20. Then we ſhould not be caſt down at any Chaſtiſement or Afflictions that GOD is pleaſed to lay upon us, becauſe it is written, *Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth*, Heb. 12. 6. Then we ſhould never deſpair of GOD's Mercy in the Pardon of our Sins, becauſe it is writ

ten, *If any Man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins,* 1 John 2. 1, 2. Then we ſhould preſs towards the Mark for the Prize of the High Calling of GOD in Chriſt Jeſus, becauſe it is written, *To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me on my Throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne,* Rev. 3. 21.

Yea, could we always live with a firm Belief of what is written in GOD's holy Word, we ſhould live in the other World, while we are in this; our Converſations would be always in Heaven, our Thoughts and Affections would be ſtill running upon Almighty GOD as preſent with us, or upon our Saviour, as interceding for us, or upon the Work that He hath ſet us, or upon the Account that we muſt give him of it, or upon the Reward that He hath promiſed to thoſe who do it faithfully, or upon ſomething or other which we find there written; and ſo ſhould ſteer on an even Courſe thro' all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, till we come to the End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls, thro' Jeſus Chriſt our only Saviour, *to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever.* Amen.

Now

Now theſe things being thus plainly laid down before you, give me leave to deal freely with you concerning what ye have now heard, for it concerns you all very much, infinitely more than any thing in this World can do. You cannot ſurely but know, that without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe GOD, that your Sins can never be pardon'd, nor your Souls ever ſaved without it. Now by what you have now heard, you may eaſily perceive whether you have true Faith or no, whether you believe the Goſpel, as you are there requir'd, to the Saving of your Souls. For if the Word preached, makes no Impreſſion upon you; If you hear Sermon after Sermon, as many do, to our Shame be it ſpoken, and yet be never the Wiſer nor better for it; If you be not *Doers of the Word, but Hearers only, deceiving your own Souls*: you may then conclude, that notwithſtanding your Profeſſion of the Goſpel, you do not believe it. You believe it no more than they who do not ſo much as profeſs it, and therefore are as yet in the ſame deplorable Condition with them, even, in *the Gall of Bitterneſs, and in the Bond of Iniquity*. But if the Word preached work effectually in you; if it ſtirs up your Hearts, and ſtrengthens your Reſolutions to obey it; If it puts you upon con-

ſtant and ſincere Endeavours to live according as you are there taught, you have then good Ground to believe, that you do really believe it, and ſhall as certainly obtain what is there promiſed, as you ſincerely perform what is commanded in it.

VVherefore, in the Name of Chriſt our Saviour, I beſeech you all, not to ſatisfie yourſelves any longer with the bare Hearing of GOD's VVord. But whenſoever you hear it read or preached to you, receive it as it is in Truth the VVord of GOD, and act your Faith accordingly upon it, that ſo it may work effectually in you, both while you hear it, and whenſoever you call it to mind again. As for Example, you have lately heard, how you ought to worſhip and glorify GOD, and how to ſerve him daily in his Houſe of Prayer, and often at his Holy Table: Theſe things have been plainly deliver'd to you out of GOD's own VVord.

Now, tho' you have hitherto ſeem'd not to regard GOD's Holy VVord, nor ſo much as to believe it to be his VVord, in that you have not done it, yet now that you are put in mind of it again, *ſhew your Faith by your Works*; manifeſt to the VVorld, and to your own Conſciences, that you believe GOD's VVord, by your conſtant performing the foreſaid Duties,

and

and whatſoever elſe you hear to be there required of you. And whenſoever you have the Goſpel preached to you, do but receive it with Faith, and you cannot but receive Benefit and Comfort from it. Then every Sermon you hear will do you good, and you will have Cauſe to thank GOD for it. And ſo ſhall we alſo who preach GOD's Word unto you: For then we may truly ſay to you, as the Apoſtle here ſaith to the Theſſalonians, *For this Cauſe alſo thank we* GOD *without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the Word of* GOD, *which ye heard of us, ye receiv'd it not as the Word of Men, but as it is in Truth, the Word of* GOD, *which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe.*

SERMON XI.

2 COR. 5. 20.

Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though GOD *did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to* GOD.

WE live in an Age, and among a People that place a great part, if not the whole, of their Religion in hearing Sermons: And yet we find but few that are ever the more Religious for all they hear. Moſt contenting themſelves with coming to Church, and continuing or perhaps ſitting down there all the while that the Prayers are read, and a Sermon Preached, and then going home again, without ever concerning themſelves any further about what they have heard; nor ſo much as thinking of it any more. And then it is no wonder that they are never the wiſer, nor the better for it. But it

may

may juſtly ſeem a great wonder, how it comes to paſs, that the Word of GOD which of itſelf is *ſharper than a two-edged Sword*, ſhould notwithſtanding make ſo little Impreſſion upon thoſe who hear it. But though they hear it over and over again, they are never *pricked in their Heart*, as S^t *Peter*'s hearers were, nor any way touched or affected with it; but ſtill continue juſt as they were, careleſs and unconcerned about their future State, and every thing relating to it, how plainly, how powerfully ſoever it is preſſed upon them.

This may juſtly ſeem ſtrange to one that conſiders, how commonly the Word of GOD is Preached among us, both in the City and Country. But ſeveral Reaſons may be aſſign'd for it. One of the chief is, that Men in hearing the Word Preached, uſually look no further than to him that Preacheth it; taking what he ſaith to them as coming only from him their Fellow-Greature, a Man of like Paſſions with themſelves, and therefore regard it no more than what is ſaid by any other Man. Whereas if they really believed and conſidered, that the Word they hear is the Word of GOD himſelf, and that he who Preacheth it, Preacheth not in his own Name but GOD's, and accordingly re-

ceiv'd it, as the *Theſſalonians* did, *not as the Word of Man, but as it is in truth, the Word of* GOD *which effectually worketh in them that believe*, 1 Theſſ. 2. 13. They would ſoon find it working effectually alſo upon them. It would then come wi h that Power and Force upon them, that it would cut them to the Heart, and make them cry out as S^t *Peter*'s hearers did; *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* Act. 2. 37.

This therefore is that which S^t *Paul* in my Text puts the *Corinthians* in mind of. And the better to prepare them for it, he firſt acquaints them in the foregoing Verſes, that, GOD hath reconciled *Mankind to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt*, and that he hath committed the Word and Miniſtry of this Reconciliation to us, the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors in all Ages; that we in his Name and by his Authority might publiſh it to the World, and perſwade Men to accept of the Peace which he now offers to them, ſo as to be reconciled to him, as he is to them by Jeſus Chriſt. And having ſaid this, the Apoſtle draws this Concluſion from it; *Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though* GOD *did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to* GOD.

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This is a Truth ſo neceſſary for all Chriſtians to know, that it is the firſt thing that S^t *Paul* put thoſe he wrote to in mind of in all his Epiſtles, (which he wrote as from himſelf only, without joyning any other with him) beginning them with ſaying, *Paul the Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt*, or, *Paul called to be an Apoſtle*, or the like; that they to whom he wrote might know, that he did not write to them as a private Perſon, but as an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, that is, as the Word ſignifies a Legate or Meſſenger of Chriſt, ſent and empower'd by him to write: That ſo they might receive what he was about to write to them, not as coming from him, but from Chriſt himſelf; an Apoſtle being in effect the ſame with an Ambaſſador. But foreſeeing that this Name would in proceſs of Time be appropriated only to the Twelve, and ſuch as were called immediately by Chriſt himſelf, as He and ſome other were; therefore in my Text, ſpeaking not only of theſe, but of ſuch alſo as ſhould ſucceed them in any part of their Apoſtolical Office in all Ages, he alters the Phraſe, not ſaying, we are *Apoſtles*, but we are *Ambaſſadors* for Chriſt. A Word, that is commonly known to ſignifie ſuch as are ſent by a by a Prince to a Foreign Country, to treat

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in his Name about Matters of State, as particularly about Peace and War. And ſo Chriſt himſelf uſeth the Word, where ſpeaking of a King going to make War with another King, he ſaith, that *He ſits down* firſt, *and conſults whether he be able to meet him* or no: *Or elſe, while the other is a great way off, he ſendeth an Ambaſſage, and deſireth Conditions of Peace*, Luk. 14. 32. So here, although Almighty GOD can meet with us when he pleaſeth, and we are no way able to withſtand him; yet howſoever he is Graciouſly pleaſed to ſend ſome Men to treat with others in his Name about Peace with him, to acquaint them with the eaſie Conditions that he hath made and expects from them, and to aſſure them that upon their Performance of the ſaid Conditions, he will be reconciled to them, and at Peace with them: And therefore all who are thus Sent or Commiſſionated by Him, to Act in His Name, are properly called *Ambaſſadors*; and, as the Apoſtle here ſaith, *Ambaſſadors for Chriſt*, or in the Place and ſtead of Chriſt. As it was He that procured this Peace for Mankind, ſo He is the chief manager of all Things relating to it: Therefore called, the Angel, or, as we tranſlate it, *the Meſſenger of the Covenant*, Mal. 3. 1. Becauſe He was Sanctified

fied and sent by the Father, *to Publish and Declare it to the World*, Joh. 6. 57. *cap*. 8. 29. *cap*. 10. 36. And did it so faithfully, that before He went out of the World He could truly say unto the Father . *I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest me out of the World,——I have given unto them the Words which thou gavest me : And they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed, that thou didst send me*, Joh. 17. 6, 8. Where we may likewise observe, that like a wise and faithful Ambassador, He kept strictly to the Instructions, and to the very Words which the Father had given Him ; in whose Name he professeth that He came, and Spake and Acted all along while He was upon Earth, *John* 5. 43. *chap*. 8. 38 *chap*. 10. 25.

Wherefore Jesus Christ being the Mediator between GOD and Men, and as such, having all Power given him in Heaven and Earth for the transacting the great business of Reconciliation between them ; when he was about to leave the Earth, as Man, and go up to Heaven, to reside there as our Advocate with the Father, he delegated some Men to supply his Place upon Earth, and to carry on the great Work which he had begun among Men :

These

These he called *his Apostles* or *Ambassadors*, because they were sent by Him, and empowered to Act in his Name and stead, and according to the Instructions that he gave them. Which that the World in all Ages might be fully assured of, he order'd the Commission which he granted them to be Recorded, *Joh.* 20. Where it is written; That the same Day on which he rose from the Dead, in the Evening, he came to them where they were assembled, and when he had convinced them that he was the same Person that had been Crucified three Days before, by shewing them his Hands and Feet that were nailed to the Cross, he then said unto them again, *Peace be unto you. As my Father sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained*, v. 21, 22, 23.

Where we may observe, that he sent them after the very same manner as the Father had sent him. *As my Father*, saith he, *sent me, even so send I you.* And therefore as the Father had sent him by Anointing him *with the Holy Ghost*, for the Office he was to perform, *Isa.* 61. 1. *Luk.* 4. 18. *Act.* 10. 38. which was signified by the *Spirit descending*

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like a Dove, and lighting upon him, when he was Baptized and so inaugurated into the said Office: Even so, he sent his Apostles; for *he breathed on them*, and saith, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*; the Holy Ghost proceeding from him as it doth from the Father: When Christ breathed upon his Apostles, he thereby *anointed them with the Holy Ghost and with Power*, to execute the Office which he now committed to them. And that they might know, that this was designed not only for them, but for all that should succeed them in the said Office to the End of the World, when he afterwards gave them his Instructions for the Execution of it, he said to them; *Lo, I am with you always, even to End of the World*, Matt. 28. 20. From whence the Apostles clearly understanding that their Office was to continue to the End of the World, they took care to confer it upon others by laying their hands upon them, and so transferring to them of the same Spirit which they had received from Christ, the same way that *Moses* had done it by GOD's own Appointment to *Joshua*, *Numb*. 27, 18, 23. And therefore such upon whom they laid their hands, are said to be sent by the Holy Ghost, particularly *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *Act*. 13. 4. And the same S^t *Paul* tells

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the Elders of *Epheſus* upon whom he had laid his hands, that the Holy Ghoſt had made them Biſhops or *Overſeers*, Act. 20. 28. And put *Timothy* in mind of the Gift of GOD which was in him by the laying on of his hands, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. Thus the Holy Ghoſt which the Apoſtles received immediately from Chriſt himſelf, hath been handed down from them to other, and ſo to others ſucceſſively to this Day, and will be to the End of the World. And all ſuch on whom they who regularly ſucceed the Apoſtles in their whole Office, lay their hands with an intention to confer the Holy Ghoſt, as in the Ordination of Prieſts among us; they alſo receive ſuch a meaſure of it whereby they are qualified and commiſſion'd to Act in Chriſt's Name and ſtead, in the Adminiſtration of the Word and Sacraments, as the Apoſtles themſelves did; and therefore are properly Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as they were. And Chriſt is as really with them as he was with his firſt Apoſtles, in the Execution of their Office in all Ages, according to the Promiſe he made them, of being *with them always even to the End of the World.*

It was neceſſary to make this as plain as I could in few Words; that ye may underſtand how we come to be Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as the Apoſtle here ſpeaks, ſo as to act in his Name and by his Commiſſion, without which nothing we do can ſignifie any thing. Any Man may read the Scriptures, or make an Oration to the People, but it is not that which the Scriptures call Preaching the Word of GOD, unleſs he be ſent by GOD to do it. *For how can they preach except they be ſent?* Rom. 10. 16. A Butcher might kill an Ox or a Lamb, as well as the High-Prieſt; but it was no Sacrifice to GOD, unleſs one of his Prieſts did it. *And no Man taketh this Honour to himſelf, but he that is called of* GOD, *as was Aaron*, Heb. 5. 4. Any Man may treat of Publick Affairs as well as an Ambaſſador; but he cannot do it to any purpoſe, without a Commiſſion from his Prince. As ſuppoſe a Foreign Nation ſhould ſet up one among themſelves to make a League with *England*, what would that ſignifie, when he is not Authoriz'd by the King to do it? And yet this is the Caſe of many among us, who, as the Apoſtle foretold, cannot *endure ſound Doctrine, but after their own Luſts heap to themſelves Teachers, having itching Ears*, 2 Tim. 4. 3. But ſuch Teachers as

Men thus heap to themſelves, howſoever they may tickle their itching Ears, they can never touch their Hearts. For that can be done only by the Power of GOD, accompanying and aſſiſting his own Inſtitution and Commiſſion. Inſomuch that if I did not think, or rather was not fully aſſured, that I had ſuch a Commiſſion to be an Ambaſſador for Chriſt, and to act in his Name; I ſhould never think it worth the while to Preach or Execute any Miniſterial Office. For I am ſure, that all I did would be null and void of itſelf, according to GOD's ordinary way of working; and we have no ground to expect Miracles. But bleſſed be GOD, we in our Church by a ſucceſſive Impoſition of hands continued all along from the Apoſtles themſelves, receive the ſame Spirit that was conferr'd upon them for the Adminiſtration of the Word and Sacraments ordained by our Lord and Maſter, and therefore may do it as effectually to the Salvation of Mankind as they did. For as they were, ſo are we *Ambaſſadors for Chriſt.*

As though GOD did beſeech you by us, or, as the words may be render'd, As if GOD did call upon you by us; by us, as he did by Chriſt, whoſe Ambaſſadors we are, and Proxies in Things pertaining unto GOD. So that *GOD who at ſundry*

times

times and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets, and hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son, Heb. 1. 1. He ſtill continues to ſpeak by thoſe whom his Son hath ſent to ſpeak in his Name. As the Son himſelf ſaid to his Apoſtles, and in them to all that ſhould regularly ſucceed them; *It is not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you*, Matt. 10. 20. Whatſoever we ſpeak according to the Inſtructions which Chriſt our Maſter hath given us, *it is in Truth the Word of* GOD, 1 Theſſ. 2. 13. It is GOD that ſpeaketh by us. According to that of *David*, *The Spirit of the Lord ſpake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue*, 2 Sam. 23. 2. For we ſpeaking only what Chriſt our Lord ſpake before us, and ſpeaking it only in his Name and by his Authority, as what he ſpake was the Word of GOD, ſo is that which we ſpeak too: For we ſpeak, or, as it were, repeat it only after Him, as his Ambaſſadors, ſent by him to ſpeak it in his Place and ſtead.

And therefore, it follows in the Text, *we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead*: As if Chriſt himſelf was here preſent. For he being now as to his Body in Heaven, he ſends his Miniſters or Ambaſſadors to repreſent

him, and ſupply his Place upon Earth, and to do in his Name what he himſelf did when he was here, and would ſtill do if he was now preſent in Body, as he is by his Spirit and Power; according to the foreſaid Promiſe, which he made to his Apoſtles and Ambaſſadors in all Ages, *Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the World*: And according to what he told them upon another occaſion, ſaying, *He that heareth you, heareth me: And he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me: And he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me*, Luk. 10. 16. Whereby he plainly ſignified what he afterwards told them in expreſs Terms, that, As the Father ſent him, ſo he ſent them as his Ambaſſadors to treat in his Name: And that as the Perſons of Ambaſſadors are always reckoned Sacred and Inviolable; ſo that what an Ambaſſador doth in the Name of his Prince, is look'd upon as done by the Prince himſelf: And as an affront offer'd to an Ambaſſador, reflects on the Prince that ſent him; So whatſoever is done to the Miniſters or Ambaſſadors of Chriſt as ſuch, is done to Chriſt himſelf. They who hear them, hear Him, and they who deſpiſe them, deſpiſe Him; as they who deſpiſe Him, whom the Father ſent, deſpiſe the Father who ſent him.

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From hence therefore ye may ſee, how truly the Apoſtle here ſaith : *We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead*, and how neceſſary it is for you to hearken to what we ſay in his Name, leſt ye be found in the number of thoſe who deſpiſe Chtiſt, together with the Doctrine that he teacheth, and the Advice that he gives you by us : For it is in his ſtead we pray you. But what do we pray you in his ſtead to do ? Nothing but what is really for your good: Nothing but what tends to your Eternal Happineſs and Welfare, and therefore nothing but what it is your intereſt to do, whether we prayed you to do it, or no. For ſeeing Chriſt came into the World for no other End, but to make you happy ; and hath done and ſuffer'd ſo much as he hath for that only purpoſe ; ye cannot imagine that he by us, or we from him, ſhould pray you to do any thing but what is indiſpenſably neceſſary in order to your attainment of true Felicity. And altho' we do not command, but only pray you in Chriſt's ſtead ; yet it being in his ſtead we pray, ye ought to give the ſame defe-rence to it, as if we commanded you. The Requeſt of an Earthly Prince, is taken by his faithful Subjects as a Command : How much more when the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, is pleaſed

to condeſcend ſo far as to make a Requeſt to you? That ſurely is to be received as the higheſt ſort of Commanding, in that it doth not only ſignifie his Will, but alſo lays a freſh Obligation upon you to obſerve it, ſeeing He is graciouſly pleaſed to deal ſo gently and kindly with you, in ſuch a way as that your Obedience to Him may be your own voluntary Act: Not being forc'd into it only by his peremptory Command, but drawn with the Bands of Love.

Love indeed! The higheſt that can be ſhewn you. For after all, what is it that we thus pray you in Chriſt's ſtead? Nothing elſe but to be reconcil'd to GOD, *we pray you*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *in Chriſt's ſtead, Be ye reconciled to GOD.* One would think, there was no great Need that ſuch a Requeſt ſhould be made to you, much leſs that it ſhould be made in no leſs a Name than His that made and governs the World. For, who would not of his own accord be reconcil'd to GOD, if he might? If Men would but conſult their own real Intereſt, this certainly would be the firſt thing they would all ſtrive after. And yet GOD knows there are but few that do it: And therefore, out of his infinite Love and Mercy, He is pleaſed to ſend his Ambaſſadors one after another, riſing

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up early, and ſending them to call upon Men, and to pray them in his Name to do it. And he hath ſent me this Day to make the ſame Requeſt and Prayer to you, even that ye would be reconcil'd to him.

But that ye may fully underſtand what it is that I pray you in Chriſt's ſtead to do, and likewiſe how ye may do it aright, ye muſt take notice, that *by Nature* ye are all *the Children of Wrath*, one as well as another, *Epheſ.* 2. 3. For he that made you, is angry with you, for not anſwering his End in making you, which was to ſerve and glorifie Him in obeying and obſerving the Laws which He for that purpoſe hath ſet you. Whereas ye have all broken His ſaid Laws, and ſo in ſtead of glorifying, ye have diſhonoured Him thro' the whole Courſe of your Lives, and therefore are juſtly fallen under his Diſpleaſure. But he notwithſtanding hath been graciouſly pleaſed to find out, and put you into, a way of being reconciled to him: Not by ſuffering your Sins to go unpuniſh'd, but by not imputing them to you, but laying the Puniſhments which were due unto him for them, upon another, even upon his Only-begotten Son, as the Apoſtle here acquaints us from him, ſaying, *For he hath made him who knew no Sin, to be Sin for us, or an Offering for our Sins*; that is, as the Pro-

phet expresseth it, *He hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all*, Isa. 53. 6. And his Only-begotten Son having thus born the Punishments which his Justice required for our Sins, He is now ready to extend his Mercy to us, and to receive us again into his Favour, upon such easie Terms and Conditions, that it is our own Fault, unless we perform them, so as to be reconciled again to GOD.

For all that is requir'd on your Parts, is only to *repent and believe the Gospel*, Mark 1. 15. This was all that our Lord himself called upon Mankind to do, when he first entred upon his Ministry, and the Substance of all that He taught afterwards, and commanded his Apostles to teach. He himself saith, That *he came to call Sinners to Repentance*, Luke 5. 32. And told his Disciples, *That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations*, Luke 24. 47. First Repentance, and then Remission of Sins; but both in his Name, and among all Nations, that all might believe in Him for it. And accordingly, when the People desir'd to know of St. *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles what they should do? St. *Peter* said unto them, *Repent and be Baptiz'd every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the Remission of Sins*,

Acts

Acts 2.37. They must not only repent, so as to forsake their former Superstitions and Vices of all sorts, but they must also believe in Jesus Christ; so as to be Baptized in his Name, and become his Disciples indeed, believing and practising all that He hath taught them before they could be reconciled to GOD so as to have their Sins pardoned. This is that which Christ himself also gave in charge to his Apostles, at the same time that He sent them out as his Ambassadors into the World: *Go ye*, saith He, *and teach*, or rather make, *all Nations* Disciples, *baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World*, Matth. 28. 19, 20. These are the Instructions which He gave them and their Successors, together with their Commission to be his Ambassadors to the End of the World. He requires them to go and call upon all Nations to become his Disciples, and to make them so by Baptizing them according to his Institution, In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost: And then to teach them to observe not only some, but all things whatsoever He hath commanded, whether with his own Mouth, or else by his Prophets, Apostles,

or

or other Holy Men of GOD, who ſpake as they were moved by his Holy Spirit.

Theſe therefore being the Orders and Inſtructions which Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord and Saviour of Mankind, hath given to all whom he ſends and employs as his Ambaſſadors upon Earth; In his Name and in his Stead, I pray and beſeech all here preſent, to come up to the Terms which he hath made for your Reconciliation to GOD. Repent, repent of all your former Sins. You cannot but all know, every one, the Sins that he hath hitherto been guilty of, and is ſtill addicted to. If ye do but look into your own Hearts and Lives, you cannot but ſee, how little Good, and how much Evil you have done ſince ye came into the World. You cannot but be conſcious to your ſelves, that you have often tranſgreſſed the Laws and Commandments of Almighty GOD, who ſent you hither, by doing what you ought not to do, and by not doing what ye ought; and ſo have broken alſo that ſolemn Vow and Promiſe which ye made to GOD, when ye were Baptized, and made the Members and Diſciples of Jeſus Chriſt, and are ſtill apt to do ſo one way or other every Day.

Now therefore I pray you in Chriſt's Stead break off your Sins, all your Sins, by Repentance and Amendment of Life. *Let not Sin reign any longer in your mortal Body,*

that ye ſhould obey it in the Luſts thereof: But mortifie the Deeds of the Body, and deſtroy the ill Habits ye have contracted by a long Continuance in any Sort of Vice or Wickedneſs. Set yourſelves in good earneſt, upon *denying Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent World.* Take heed that your Hearts be never over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, or the Cares of this Life. Be Juſt and Righteous in all your Dealings, and if ye have wronged any Man, be ſure to make him Reſtitution. *As ye have Opportunity, do good all Men, eſpecially to them that are of the Houſhold of Faith; and whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, even ſo do ye unto them. Love the Lord your* GOD *with all your Hearts, and with all your Souls: Pray without ceaſing, and in every thing give Thanks unto him: Sanctifie his Holy Name, and make him your only Fear and Dread.* Live with a conſtant Dependence upon his Word, and Submiſſion to his Will. Acknowledge him in all your Ways, honour him with all your Subſtance, *ſerve and worſhip him with Reverence and Godly Fear.* Let your Hearts be always running after him, your Spirits rejoycing in him, and your whole Souls be reconciled and inclined to him, and to thoſe Holy Ways

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that he hath prepared for you to walk in. Study all ye can to promote his Glory, in your several Places and Stations in the World. And for that purpose, *Cease to do evil, learn to do well, and whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus.* Believe on him as your only *Saviour*, *Mediator* and *Advocate* with the Father, *who ever liveth to make Intercession for those who come unto GOD by him:* And therefore as you thus truly repent of all your Sins, and come unto GOD by him, trust also and depend upon him to make your Peace with GOD; nothing doubting but that he will intercede so effectually for you, that for his Sake, and upon the Account of his Merits and Mediation for you, your Sins being all pardon'd, GOD will be reconciled to you, and you shall be reconciled to GOD, and restor'd to his Love and Favour again, as much as if ye had never offended him in all your Lives.

Having thus pray'd you in Christ's Stead, and for the most part in his very Words, to be reconciled to GOD, it may seem needless to use any Arguments to perswade you to it; for if ye will not hearken to what Christ Himself desires of you, much less will you regard any thing that I can say unto you. But in this also I shall not speak in my own Name, but His; and in his

Stead

Stead pray you to consider, first, who it is that desires this of you: Not I, your Fellow-Worm, but Christ Himself; Christ, the Eternal Son of GOD, the Only-Begotten of the Father, the Lord GOD Almighty: *Christ, who being in the Form of* GOD, *thought it no Robbery to be equal to* GOD, and yet for your Sakes *made Himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant:* Christ, *who being thus found in Fashion as a Man,* really and truly Man as well as GOD, *became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross,* and all to appease the Wrath of GOD, and reconcile him to you: Christ, who is now at the Right Hand of the Father, *and is made Head over all things for the Church,* that nothing may hinder their Reconciliation to GOD, who apply themselves to him, and do what he requires in order to it. This is that Christ, who requires you to do what ye have now heard. And will ye not do any thing ye can for him, who hath done and suffer'd so much for you? For Him who lov'd you so as to lay down his own Life for you? Surely you can never deny him any thing, much less when he desires nothing of you, but only that you would be reconciled to GOD. This is the only End of all he did for Mankind upon Earth, the End of all that he is now doing in Heaven, and

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the End of his ſending me at this time to ſolicit, and pray you in his Stead to do it. And if ye ſtill ſtand out and refuſe to come in upon his moſt Gracious Advice and Requeſt, what Favour can ye ever expect from him? None, certainly! He will be ſo far from ſhewing you any Kindneſs, ſo far from ſaving you from your Sins, and from the Wrath of GOD, that he hath told you beforehand what he will ſay to you; *Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded; but ye have ſet at nought all my Counſel, and would none of my Reproof, I alſo will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your Fear cometh*, Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26.

And your Calamity will moſt certainly come e're long, whether ye fear it or no; greater Calamity than ye are aware of, greater than ye can yet imagine. For conſider in the next Place, that until ye are reconciled to GOD, as you are Enemies to him, ſo he is an Enemy to you: He that made you is angry with you, he is incenſed againſt you. And who can imagine the diſmal Effects and Conſequents of his Diſpleaſure? If his Wrath be kindled, yea but a little, who is able to ſtand before it? The Thoughts of it are ſufficient to make the ſtouteſt Heart amongſt us tremble. To have *Jehovah*, the Lord of Hoſts, the Su-

preme

preme Governour of the VVorld; To have him angry with us, who can think of it without Horror and Amazement? VVho then can deſcribe the deplorable Condition which they are in, that lie under his Diſpleaſure? For my part, I am ſo far from being able to give you a Deſcription, that I dread the very Thoughts of it. Only we know in general, that *it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living* GOD; That all that he continues to be angry at, will moſt certainly do ſo, and by Conſequence be as miſerable as it is poſſible for them to be. For ſo long as He who governs all Things in the VVorld is angry with you, there is nothing in it can do you good, nothing but what will contribute ſome way or other to your Ruin and Deſtruction. All Things are curſed to you, thoſe alſo which you think to be Bleſſings. And all the Judgments that GOD hath threatned in his VVord againſt Sinners, ſeeing he is angry with you, ſtand ready every Moment to fall upon you. And if he ſhould once open your Eyes, to ſee him frowning upon you, you would not be able to endure yourſelves, but would wiſh with all your Souls, you could ceaſe to be, or be any thing rather than what you are, *the Veſſels of Wrath fitted for Deſtruction.*

But

But all in vain. All the World cannot help you, unleſs he that made and governs it be reconciled to you; but ye muſt be puniſhed *with everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power, when he ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe in that day*, 2 Theſſ. 1. 9, 10. When ye will be caſt into Hell-fire, *where the Worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*, Mark 9. 44.

If theſe things were laid to your Hearts as they ought to be, they would make you very reſtleſs and uneaſie, until you have made your Peace with GOD, and done all that ye have heard to be requir'd in order to your Reconciliation to Him. And how happy would you then be? As happy in the Love and Favour of GOD, as the other are miſerable under his Wrath and Fury. For when you are at peace with GOD, all things elſe will be at peace with you. He that made them, will make them to be ſo: *You ſhall be in league with the Stones of the Field, and the Beaſts of the Field ſhall be at peace with you*, Job 5. 23. Yea, *when a Man's ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh his Enemies to be at peace with him*, Prov. 16. 7. And not only they, but all things elſe ſhall work together for

your

your Good, ſo long as ye continue in his Favour, who governs and diſpoſeth of all things as he pleaſeth. For when ye are reconciled to him, he will look upon you as his Friends, his Favourites, his Children, and will deal accordingly with you. He will take you into his own particular Care and Conduct. He will hide you under his Wings, that no Evil may come near to hurt you. He will bleſs and ſanctifie all Occurrences to you. He will provide all things neceſſary, that as you have nothing that is evil, ſo ye may want nothing that is good for you. He will cauſe the Light of his Countenance to ſhine upon you, and manifeſt his ſpecial Love and Favour to you, that you may ſee him ſmiling upon you, rejoycing over you, and delighting to do you good: In which bleſſed Sight our Happineſs chiefly conſiſteth. He will guide you by his Counſel, aſſiſt you by his Grace, protect you by his Power, enlighten, quicken, actuate, ſupport, and ſtrengthen you by his Holy Spirit, that you may paſs thro' all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, ſo as to come at laſt to live with him and his holy Angels, in the perfect Viſion and Fruition of his eternal Godhead.

But what do I mean, to offer at deſcribing the Happineſs of thoſe who are reconciled to GOD? When to be in his Favour, is itſelf the greateſt Happineſs that a Creature is capable of, and ſuch as none can apprehend but they who have it. Yet this is that Happineſs which the Eternal Son of GOD hath purchaſed for Mankind, and ſends his Ambaſſadors about to invite them to it. It is in his Name I come to all that are here preſent at this time, and *pray you in his ſtead, Be ye all now reconciled unto* GOD; Now, while ye may. Bleſſed be GOD, ye all may as yet be reconciled to Him, if ye will but take the Courſe for it, which hath been now deſcribed to you out of his Holy Word. Otherwiſe, He would not have ſent me to call upon you, nor brought you hither to be called upon to do it; but if ye turn your Backs, and refuſe or neglect to hearken to Him now, ye know not whether He will ever call upon you any more. Wherefore I pray you again in his ſtead, put off this great Work no longer, but begin it now. *For why will ye die?* Why will ye deſtroy your ſelves, when ye need not? Why will ye continue any longer under the Diſpleaſure of Almighty GOD, when

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ye may be reſtored to his Favour, if ye will but ſeek it? But then ye muſt ſeek it in his own way, in the conſtant Uſe of the Means which He hath appointed, whereby to obtain his Grace and Aſſiſtance, to do what is requir'd of you. What they are ye all know: And therefore I need ſay no more. But as I have now prayed you in Chriſt's ſtead, to be reconciled to GOD, ſo in his Name I pray GOD to be reconciled to you, and to *open your Eyes that ye may ſee the things that belong to your everlaſting Peace, before they be hid from you.*

SERMON XII.

2 COR. xiii. 14.

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of GOD, *and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.*

IT would be great rashness in us who know so little of our own, to enquire into the Nature of Him that made us, any further than He himself hath been pleased to make it known unto us in his Holy Word. But it would be the height of impudence and presumption to offer at explaining the incomprehensible Mystery of the most Glorious Trinity; How three distinct Persons subsist in the same individual Nature, so as to be all one and the same GOD. It is sufficient for us to believe what is written, that there is but One Living and True GOD; that *the Lord our GOD is one Jehovah*, one Being, the Lord, *Deut.* 6. 4. That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,

these

theſe Three are one Being, one Jehovah, one God: That the Father is of himſelf, the Son of the Father, the Holy Ghoſt of the Father and the Son, and *yet none before or after other: none greater or leſs than another; but the whole three Perſons co-eternal together and co-equal,* This we are bound to believe, becauſe it is revealed by GOD himſelf, and therefore revealed by Him, that we may believe it upon His Word, altho' it be above the reach of our finite Underſtandings, as He himſelf knows it is: And therefore doth not require us to underſtand, but to believe it; and hath made known as much of it as he thought good, for that purpoſe only, that we might know what He would have us to believe concerning it.

Now, one very remarkable thing reveal'd in the Holy Scriptures concerning the moſt Glorious Trinity, is this, That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, although they be all one and the ſame GOD, yet they often exert and manifeſt Themſelves and Their Divine Perfections ſeverally, as well as joyntly, and ſo have their ſeveral ways of Working in the World: As appears from many places, and particularly from the Words I have now read; *The Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Love of* GOD, *and the Communion of Holy Ghoſt be with you all.* For here

we have three Divine Perſons diſtinctly named: The Son, called the Lord, as he commonly is, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the Father, here called in an eſpecial manner God, as being the Root and Fountain of the Deity, as the Primitive Writers ſtile him; and then here is the third Perſon, expreſly called the Holy Ghoſt. And to each of theſe Perſons, here is a ſeveral Property or Perfection attributed, the Apoſtle wiſhing to the *Corinthians*, the *Grace* of *one*, the *Love* of *another*, and the *Communion* of *the third*; which does not only ſhew that they are three diſtinct Perſons or Subſiſtences, but alſo that they have diſtinct Operations, or their ſeveral ways of Working, and manifeſting themſelves in the World. Which if rightly underſtood, would give us great light into what we ought to believe concerning each Perſon; and how we ought to exerciſe our Faith upon all and every one of them, according to the Diſcoveries which they are pleaſed to make of themſelves, with reſpect to us. And therefore I ſhall endeavour to explain it as clearly as I can, being a Matter of ſo high a nature: Humbly beſeeching Him, of whom I ſpeak, ſo to aſſiſt and direct me, that I may ſay nothing but what is agreeable to His Holy Word, and becoming His Divine Majeſty.

For this purpose therefore, we must, *First*, consider in general, that this Almighty, most Glorious and Eternal Being, which we call *GOD*, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, hath been graciously pleased to shew forth and manifest Himself and His Divine Perfections many wonderful ways, particularly in the Creation and Redemption of the World. In the first he manifested his Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; in the other His Infinite Love, and Justice, and Mercy, and Truth to Mankind: In both the Infinite Glory of His Eternal Godhead. And it is much to be observed, that in both these great Works that He hath done, whereby to set forth His Glory, we find three distinct Persons specified or particularly named by Himself, as concurring in the doing of them, and each in a way peculiar to Himself. The Account that He himself hath given us of His Creation or troduction of all things out of Nothing, begins thus, *In the Beginning GOD created the Heaven and the Earth.* Where the word in the Original אֱלֹהִים which we translate *GOD*, is of the Plural Number; but it is joyned with a Verb of the Singular, as it is almost every-where in the Old Testament. Now although I will not say, that an Argument can be drawn from hence to convince a Gain-sayer, that there are just three

Perſons in the Godhead, becauſe a word of the Plural Number may poſſibly ſignifie more: Yet ſeeing that in *Hebrew*, where there is likewiſe a Dual, Three is the firſt Plural Number: And ſeeing the firſt muſt in reaſon be preferr'd before all other: And ſeeing GOD himſelf hath in many places of His Word acquainted us that there are three Perſons and no more in his Godhead; we may reaſonably from hence infer, that GOD calleth himſelf by this Name of the Plural, and joyns it with Verbs and Adjectives of the Singular Number, on purpoſe to put us in mind of the Trinity in Unity, that He is Three in One, and that every one of theſe Divine Perſons is to be adored and worſhipped alike; that being, as I take it, the true notion of the word. For though the Root from whence אֱלוֹהַּ *Eloah* comes, be not preſerv'd in the *Hebrew* Tongue, it is in the *Arabick* Dialect. Where الٰه *Alaha*, ſignifies to Worſhip or Adore: And accordingly אֱלוֹהַּ, *Eloah*, ſignifies one that is to be worſhipped: And in the Plural Number אֱלֹהִים, *Elohim*, Perſons adorable, ſuch as are and ought to be worſhipped by all things that are, as He, to be ſure, ought to be, by whom all things were made, and were made by Him for that End, that He might be worſhipped by them. And it is very obſervable, that in the next Chapter,

when

when the Creation was finiſhed, he is called by two names, יהוה אלהים, the one of the Singular Number, the other of the Plural; the one ſignifying his Eſſence, the other the Perſons ſubſiſting in it. But in all the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, while He was doing this Great Work, He is not ſo much as once called by any other name than אלהים *Adorandi*, or *Adorabiles*, Perſons to be adored; but by that He is called above thirty times in that one Chapter: Whereby I humbly conceive He hath ſignified his pleaſure to us, that when we conſider his Creation of the World, we ſhould aſcribe it to all the three Perſons, and adore them for it. And indeed that they were all concern'd in it, appears from the Hiſtory of the Creation itſelf: Wherein although the Creator, as I have ſhewn, be all along called אלהים, *Elohim*, Divine Perſons in the Plural Number; yet that name being as conſtantly there joyn'd with a Verb of the Singular Number, the Unity of the Divine Nature or Godhead, is likewiſe ſignified by it. In which ſenſe it is ſaid in the ſecond Verſe; *And the Spirit of GOD moved upon the Face of the Waters*: that is, the Spirit of that One GOD who is *Elohim*, Divine Perſons; Of which the Spirit here ſpoken of muſt needs be one, foraſmuch as He operates in the Creation, which none but GOD

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the Creator could do. So that we have here two distinct Persons, the Spirit of GOD, and GOD himself, whose Spirit He is, even the Father, who, as I observed before, is in an especial manner often called GOD.

After this we read, that GOD made all things by his Word. *He said, let there be Light, and there was Light*, v. 3. and so He made his Works all the six Days, until He came to make Man, He made them all by his Word: Not by any outward Word spoken, but by speaking in himself, by willing them to be, and so by his inward, his essential Word; that is, by his Eternal and Only-begotten Son, as we are fully assured by his Evangelist St *John*; who by his direction begins the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ, with this Character of Him: *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with* GOD, *and the Word was* GOD. *The same was in the Beginning with* GOD. *All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made*, Joh. 1. 1, 2, 3. And to the same purpose St *Paul* speaking of the Son of GOD, saith, *By Him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in the Earth, visible or invisible; whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers: All things were created by Him, and*

and for Him, Col. 1, 16. Eph. 3. 9. And elſewhere, *By whom He made the Worlds*, Heb. 1. 2. From all which it appears, that the Word by which GOD made the World, was his only Son, then with Him. If his Son, then a Perſon, and if with Him, then a diſtinct Perſon from Him. So that now we plainly ſee Three diſtinct Perſons manifeſting Themſelves in the Creation of the World, GOD the Father, his Son, and his Spirit. As the Royal Prophet alſo long ago obſerved, ſaying, *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Hoſt of them by the Breath* (or Spirit) *of his mouth*, Pſal. 33. 6.

To this we may add that remarkable Paſſage which occurs in the Formation of Man, as both explaining and confirming all that hath been hitherto ſaid. For upon the ſixth or laſt Day of the Creation, when GOD was pleaſed to make Man, it is written; *And GOD ſaid, let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeneſs*, Gen. 1. 26. In the Original it is, ויאמר אלהים, And GOD in the Plural Number, ſaid, in the Singular: He ſaid, let *Us* make Man; and let Us make him in *Our* Image, after *Our* Likeneſs; ſtill in the Plural Number. Which ſhews us plainly as words can do it, that ſeveral Perſons concurred in this great Work; and that they had all one

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and the ſame Image and Likeneſs, and therefore were of one and the ſame Nature or Eſſence. Neither can the words poſſibly bear any other ſenſe. All that the *Jews* and *Socinians* have ſaid upon them according to their blaſphemous Doctrine, makes them downright nonſenſe; whereas, according to our Chriſtian Doctrine, nothing is more plain and eaſie. For when the moſt Bleſſed Trinity was pleaſed to make Man, the Chief and Lord of all earthly Creatures, He did not ſay as in the making of other Creatures, Let there be a Man, but let Us, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, make Man; and let Us make him as like unto Ourſelves, who are all of the ſame Likeneſs, as a Creature can be made. All which might be, as in effect it was, moſt truly and properly ſaid, according to our common way of ſpeaking: Whereas, if there were not ſeveral Divine Perſons then in Being, or but only One, to whom could GOD ſay, let Us make Man; who but a Divine Perſon could do ſuch a work? Or how could He ſay, let *Us* make him in *Our* Image, after *Our* Likeneſs, if there was only one Perſon in the World, in whoſe Image and Likeneſs he could be made? No, all the Wit of Man, and of the Devil himſelf, can never invalidate the invincible Force

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of this place, to prove that there were ſeveral Divine Perſons of the ſame Divine Eſſence, that ſeverally exerted and diſcovered themſelves in the Creation of the World in general, and particularly in the Making of Mankind.

And as it was in the Creation, ſo it was likewiſe in the Redemption of Mankind. The World was made by the Word of GOD; and it was redeemed by the ſame Word, the Son of GOD, the Second of the Divine Perſons, which St. *John* calls *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Joh. 5. 7. All which, as I have ſhewn, cooperated in the making of Man at firſt; and ſo they did too in the ſaving or redeeming him, when he was fallen from the State in which he was at firſt made. For whereas there were two moſt critical times appointed for the effecting our Redemption: One for the Incarnation of our Redeemer when the Word was made Fleſh, and dwelt among us in order to it; and the other for his Baptiſm, when He was initiated as it were into it, and actually took this great Work upon Him. At both theſe times we find all the Perſons of the moſt Glorious Trinity particularly mentioned, as concerned in it.

As for the Firſt, when the Fulneſs of time was come, that the Son of GOD ſhould be incarnate, GOD ſent the Angel

Gabriel to acquaint the Bleſſed Virgin, that He ſhould be conceived and born of her: And among other things ſaith unto her, *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the Power of the higheſt ſhall over-ſhadow thee, therefore alſo that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God*, Luk. 1. 35. Upon the ſaying of which Words, and the bleſſed Virgin's expreſſing her conſent by ſaying, *Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word*; This great Work was done, the Son of GOD was conceiv'd in her, the *Word was made Fleſh*. Now here we ſee three Divine Perſons concurring in this wonderful Work. The Son of GOD, the Holy Ghoſt or Spirit of GOD, and the Higheſt, or the Father, whoſe Son the one, and whoſe Spirit or Power the other is. One was conceived: He was conceived by another, and that other was the Power of a Third Perſon. So that in this the firſt thing that was actually done in order to our Redemption, and upon which the whole Work depended; the whole Three Perſons in the moſt Bleſſed Trinity, were moſt graciouſly pleaſed to ſhew themſelves; The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, One GOD, Bleſſed for ever.

And ſo they did likewiſe moſt wonderfully at the Baptiſm of our Redeemer, when he was ſolemnly inaugurated into the Of-

Office he had undertaken for us, and accordingly began to set about it. For it is written, *And Jesus when he was Baptized, went up straight-way out of the Water, and lo, the Heavens were open'd unto him; and he saw the Spirit of* GOD, *descending like a Dove, and lighting upon him; and Lo, a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,* Matt. 3. 16,17. Here all the Three Persons of the most Holy Trinity, did evidently appear together. For here was a Voice from Heaven saying, *This is my Beloved Son,* which could be no other but the Voice of the Father, who also declared himself to be so, by calling the other his Son: And then here was the Son of this Father, declared to be so by the Father himself: And here was also the Spirit of GOD, descending like a Dove, and lighting upon the Son, and so Anointing him to be both a Priest, a Prophet and a King; who is therefore most properly called the *Messiah,* or *Christ,* the Anointed of GOD, and every way qualified to be our Mediator and Redeemer. Yea, it is wonderful to observe, these Three infinitely Glorious Incomprehensible Persons were pleased upon this extraordinary Occasion to manifest themselves severally to the very Senses of Men, to their Eyes and Ears: For the Father was heard speaking, the Son was

ſeen in the Nature of Man coming out of the Water; and the Holy Ghoſt was ſeen in the ſhape of a Dove deſcending and lighting upon him. And therefore we may truly ſay with S^t *Auguſtine*, that at this time, *Apparuit manifeſtiſſima Trinitas, Pater in voce, Filius in homine, Spiritus Sanctus in columbâ*: The Trinity appeared moſt manifeſtly; the Father in a Voice, the Son in a Man, the Holy Ghoſt in a Dove, *Aug. in Evang. Joh. tract.* 6. And with S^t *Hierome*, *Myſterium Trinitatis in Baptiſmate demonſtratur: Dominus Baptizatur, Spiritus deſcendit in ſpecie columbæ; Patris vox teſtimonium filio perhibentis, auditur.* The Myſtery of the Trinity is demonſtrated in the Baptiſm of Chriſt: The Lord is Baptized: The Spirit deſcendeth in the likeneſs of a Dove; the Voice of Father giving Teſtimony to the Son, is heard, *Hieron. in Matt.* 3. And hence it is that this Chapter is appointed as a Proper Leſſon at Morning-Prayer upon *Trinity-Sunday*, becauſe the great Myſtery which we this Day Celebrate, is ſo plainly and fully reveal'd in it.

And it is much to be obſerv'd, that as all the Three Divine Perſons, The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, thus manifeſted themſelves at the Baptiſm of our Saviour; ſo he himſelf requires, that all who would be his Diſciples, ſhould be made ſo by be-

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ing Baptized in the Name of all the ſame Perſons, ſaying to his Apoſtles, *Go ye therefore and teach*, or make, *all Nations* my Diſciples, *Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*, Matt. 28. 19. So that the ſame Divine Perſons, which ſo manifeſtly appeared at the Baptiſm of Chriſt, are all to be particularly named at the Baptiſm of every Chriſtian, by Chriſt's own Inſtitution. And no Man can be initiated into the Church of Chriſt, and ſo made a Chriſtian any other way, but by being ſo Baptized: This being the only way appointed by Chriſt himſelf for that purpoſe. Who thereby hath ſufficiently declared, that he will own none for his Diſciples but ſuch as are Baptized in the name of all the ſame Perſons which appear'd in ſo miraculous a manner, when he himſelf was Baptized: And alſo that our Salvation depends upon, and muſt be attributed unto all of them. For ſeeing he himſelf hath ſo order'd it, that none can be brought into a State of Salvation but by being firſt Baptized in the Name of all Three, all Three muſt needs be acknowledg'd to concur in the effecting of it.

And verily that they do ſo, appears moſt evidently alſo from the Words of my Text. For as all theſe Divine Perſons manifeſted themſelves in the Creation of the World in general, and at the making of Man

in particular: As they appear'd at the Incarnation and Baptism of our Redeemer; and as our Redeemer himself requires that all who would partake of that Redemption which he hath purchased, should be Baptized in the Name of all Three: So the Apostle here by his Direction, writing to such as were so Baptized at *Corinth*, and concluding his Epistle to them with an hearty Prayer, that they might have all things necessary to their Salvation, he refers all such things to three Heads, and Attributes them severally to the Three Persons in the most Holy Trinity, and accordingly prays to each of them, saying, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of* GOD, *and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all*. So that did we but understand these Words aright, we should thereby know how to exercise our Faith in all, and each of these Divine Persons, for what is necessary to our obtaining Eternal Salvation, according to their several ways of concurring to it.

But for that purpose, before we enter upon the Explication of the several Parts of the Text, it will be necessary to observe some things in general about it. As first, altho' here be Three several Persons named, and several Properties are severally attributed to them, yet they are not several, but all One and the same individual

dual GOD. This we are fully assur'd of by all those Reasons, and by all such Places of the Holy Scriptures, which demonstrate the Unity of the Godhead. As where it is said, *Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God*, (our *Elohim* in the plural Number) is *one Lord, one Jehovah*, Deut. 6. 4. This the Son asserts of the Father and Himself, saying, *I and the Father are one*, John 10. 30. Not ἕις but ἕν ἐσμεν, one Jehovah, one Being. And St *John* of all three, *There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are one*, 1 John 5. 7. Where the same Word is used again, ἕν εἰσι, *unum sunt*, they are, in the Plural Number; but they are One in the Singular; One Being, יהוה אחד One Jehovah, One GOD.

Hence, in the next place, whatsoever Perfections or Properties (except such as are purely personal) are attributed to any of these Divine Persons, are the same in all, and may equally be attributed to every one, they being all and every one the same GOD, in whom all Perfections concenter, or rather, who is all Perfection itself. And therefore, when we read of the Grace of one, the Love of another, and the Fellowship of the third Divine Person, it is not to be so understood, as if these Properties were so peculiar to those Persons to which they are here attributed, that they do not be-

belong alſo to the other. For they are the ſame in all, and may be equally attributed to one as well as another. And ſo they are in the Holy Scriptures. Here Grace is aſcribed to the Son, and Love unto the Father: In other places, Love is aſcribed to the Son, and Grace unto the Father. As where St *Paul* ſaith, *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the Love of Chriſt?* Rom. 8. 35. *And to know the Love of Chriſt, which paſſeth Knowledge*, Epheſ. 3. 19. And St *John*, *Hereby perceive we the Love of God*, (the Son) *becauſe he laid down his Life for us*, 1 John 3. 16. Here Love is plainly attributed to the Son: And ſo is Grace to the Father, where St *Paul* ſaith, *By the Grace of GOD I am what* I *am*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. And, *not by fleſhly Wiſdom, but by the Grace of GOD, we have had our Converſation in the World*, 2 Cor. 1. 12. And as we here read of the Communion, or Fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, we elſewhere read of the Fellowſhip of the Son. *GOD is faithful*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *by whom ye were called unto the Fellowſhip of his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, 1 Cor. 1. 9. And St *John* ſaith, *Truly our Fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 John 1. 3. Which I therefore obſerve, leſt any ſhould think, that we detract any thing from one Perſon, by attributing it to another. For whatſoever Divine Properties are attributed to any one, are thereby attri-

attributed unto all: They being all one and the ſame GOD, in whom all Properties alſo are one and the ſame Property; And therefore cannot be divided, nor belong to one more than to another, as they are in him.

But then we muſt obſerve withal, that notwithſtanding this, when this Almighty Being, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, is pleaſed to operate upon things without Him, and ſo to exert, and manifeſt himſelf to us, there is ſomething particular attributed to one of theſe Divine Perſons, more than to another. As it is plain, that it was not the Father, nor the Holy Ghoſt, but the Son, which took the Nature of Man upon him. It was not the Father, nor the Son, but the Holy Ghoſt, which at the Creation of the World moved upon the Face of the Waters; which at the Incarnation of Chriſt, overſhadowed the Bleſſed Virgin, and which, upon the Day of Pentecoſt, came down upon the Apoſtles. Thus, all along in the Holy Scriptures, the Father is ſaid in a peculiar manner to be our Maker, the Son our Saviour, and the Holy Ghoſt our Sanctifier. And accordingly in my Text, where the Three Perſons are all mention'd together with reſpect to us, the Apoſtle prays for ſomething particular from each of them; for the Love of the Father, as He is the Maker and Governour of the World; For the

Grace of the Son, as he is the Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind; And for the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt, as He is the Sanctifier and Comforter of all the Elect People of GOD. Which will ſerve us as a Key to open the whole Myſtery contain'd in theſe Words; as we ſhall ſee more preſently.

But here is ſtill another thing to be obſerv'd in general; which is, That the Son is here plac'd before the Father, whereas Reaſon may ſeem to require that the Father ſhould be placed firſt; as He is by the Son himſelf, commanding Baptiſm to be adminiſtred in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt; and by his beloved Diſciple, ſaying, *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt*, Matth. 28. 19. 1 John 5. 7. Acccording to which Order, the Apoſtle ſhould have ſaid, The Love of GOD the Father, and the Grace of Jeſus Chriſt; whereas, he contrarywiſe puts the Son firſt, ſaying, *The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Love of GOD*: Which being done by the ſpecial Direction of the Holy Ghoſt, there was certainly great Reaſon for it. Which that we may rightly underſtand, we muſt take notice, that in the Places before-quoted, the Divine Perſons are named in their eſſential Order, that which they have in, and among themſelves, or with Reſpect to one another: According to which, the Father

ther is placed first, because He begot the Son: The Son is placed second, because He was begotten of the Father: And the Holy Ghost last, because He proceeds from both. But the Apostle in my Text, speaks not of the Order of the Divine Persons among themselves, but of that which they observe with respect to us and our Salvation. He here wisheth to the *Corinthians*, all things necessary to their Salvation by Christ: And therefore it was necessary that he should begin first with Christ their Saviour, without whom they could never have had either the Love of GOD, or the Communion of the Holy Ghost. It is true, the Love of GOD the Father, was the first Cause or Motive of our Salvation, as our Saviour himself hath taught us, saying, *That GOD so loved the World, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting Life*, John 3. 16. But then we must observe, that our Saviour speaks here of GOD's Love to Mankind in general, saying, *GOD so loved the World*: He doth not speak of his Love to particular Men. It was out of his infinite Love to Fallen Man in general, that He sent his Son into the World; but his Love to any particular Man, is only in, and for the Sake of his said Son, and no otherwise. For by Nature, we are all Enemies to GOD, and therefore He is so to us. And

there is no way for us to be reconcil'd to Him, or to have Him reconcil'd to us, but by his Son. For, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *When we were Enemies, we were reconcil'd to God by the Death of his Son*, Rom. 5. 10. And if it be by his Son only that we are reconcil'd to GOD, it muſt needs be only by His Son, that we can have His Love and Favour: Which He therefore never ſhews to any Man, but only upon the Account of *him in whom he is well pleaſed*. But as the Apoſtle ſaith, Nothing *can ſeparate us from the Love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, Rom. 8. 39. Whereby we are given to underſtand, that the Love which GOD the Father hath for any of us, is only in his Son, and for his Sake, without whom we could expect nothing but Wrath and Vengeance from Him: And by conſequence, that the Grace of Chriſt is moſt properly here placed before the Love of GOD, ſeeing we cannot have this, unleſs we have that firſt. The ſame may be ſaid alſo of the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt: For that likewiſe is *ſhed on us abundantly thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, as the ſame Apoſtle teacheth us, *Tit.* 3. 5. Wherefore, ſeeing that we can never have either the Love of GOD the Father, or the Communion of GOD the Holy Ghoſt, but only by the Grace of GOD the Son, there was all the Reaſon in the World that the Apoſtle ſhould pray for this firſt, and

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and say first, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*; then, *the Love of God*; and lastly, *the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.*

These things being thus premised in general, we shall easily discover the Meaning of the several Parts of the Text. The first thing which the Apostle here wisheth to the *Corinthians*, is, *the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ*, which is a Phrase he delights in very much; The common Salutation that he useth at the beginning of every one of his thirteen Epistles, to those he wrote to, runs thus, *Grace be to you, and Peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* And at the End of his Epistles, he sometimes saith in short, *Grace be with you*, Col. 4. 18. Tit. 3. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 22. But most usually he concludes with, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*, Rom. 16. 24. 1 Cor. 16. 23. Gal. 6. 18. Phil. 4. 23. 1 Thess. 5. 28. 2 Thess. 3. 18. Philem. *v.* 25. And so S^t *John* concludes the Book of Revelations, and the whole New Testament, Apoc. 22. 21. From whence we may infer, that Grace is to be had only by Christ, that His Grace is the greatest Blessing that can be desir'd, and that where the Grace of Christ is, there is also the Love of GOD, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, which are therefore particularly mention'd in my Text, that we may know from whence

whence they come, and that they are to be underſtood, whereſoever the Grace of Chriſt is mention'd.

But then the Queſtion is, what is meant by the Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? And how it comes to be ſo often appropriated unto him? For which it will be neceſſary to conſider that remarkable Paſſage in the Goſpel of St *John*, where he having aſſerted the Eternal and Divine Nature of the Word or Son of GOD, he ſaith: *And the Word was made Fleſh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father) full of Grace and Truth.*—*And of his Fulneſs have all we receiv'd, and Grace for Grace. For the Law was given by* Moſes, *but Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt*, *John* 1. 14, 16, 17. Here we ſee firſt, that the Word or Son of GOD was made Fleſh, that is, he took upon him the Nature of Man in general, ſo as to become *Immanuel*, GOD with us, GOD and Man in one Perſon; and as ſuch, he is here ſaid to be full of Grace and Truth: Where by Grace, I do not queſtion but we are to underſtand, that which in the Old Teſtament is called חסד Mercy, Theſe two חסד ואמת Mercy and Truth, being very frequently put together, and Mercy always before Truth. As where it is ſaid, *All the Paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth*, Pſalm 25. 10. *Mercy and Truth are met together*,

Pſal.

Pſal. 85. 10. *By Mercy and Truth Sin is purged*, Prov. 16. 6. *Mercy and Truth preſerve the King*, Prov. 20. 28. *Thus they are joyned together*, Gen. 32. 10. 2 Sam. 2. 6. c. 15. 20. Pſal. 36. 5. and 40. 11. and 57. 3. 10. and 61. 7. and 89. 1, 2, 14. and 115. 1. and 138. 2. and 98. 3. and 100. 5. and 117. 2. Prov. 3. 3. c. 14. 22. *Thus* GOD *proclaimeth Himſelf to be abundant in Goodneſs and Truth*, Exod. 34. 6. where the Word which we tranſlate Goodneſs, is the ſame which in the Places before-quoted, is render'd Mercy, and ſo it is rightly tranſlated in that Parallel Place: *But thou, O Lord, art a* GOD *full of Compaſſion, and Gracious; Long-ſuffering and Plenteous in Mercy and Truth*, Pſal. 85. 15. And accordingly GOD the Son as Incarnate, is here ſaid to be full of Grace, or Mercy, and Truth. *And of his Fulneſs*, ſaith S^t *John*, *all we have received.* We have none but what we receive from him, and how much ſoever we receive, he is ſtill full: As the Sun is ſtill full of Light, notwithſtanding that we continually receive and enjoy it. Neither do we only receive of his Fulneſs in general, but we receive Grace for Grace, that is, all Manner of Grace, according to that Fulneſs which is in him. In him is the Fulneſs and Perfection of all Grace and Mercy: And for that it is in him our Head, we of him receive whatſoever Grace or Mercy we have occaſion for.

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And the Reaſon is, becauſe, as it here follows, *the Law was given by* Moſes, *but Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.* The Law as given by *Moſes* threatned Death and Damnation, even all Manner of Judgment without Mercy, to all that continued not in all things written in it. Which no Man having done, all are by the Law condemn'd to die, and ſuffer all the Puniſhments which are there threatned, without any Hopes of Mercy, there being none there promis'd. But as the Law was thus given by *Moſes*, Grace, or Mercy and Truth came, ἐγένετο, was made by Jeſus Chriſt, as the Author and Procurer of it. The Law hath concluded all under Sin, and therefore hath paſſed the Sentence of Condemnation upon all. And if the Sentence be ever revoked or omitted, or if it be not actually executed, it muſt be acknowledg'd to be a great Mercy. But there is no ſuch Mercy promiſed in the Law given by *Moſes*: There is not a Word of that there, nor any-where elſe, but only in the Goſpel of Chriſt; who having in our Nature undergone the Puniſhments, to which we are condemn'd by the Law, he hath thereby made way for Mercy to be ſhewn us, by GOD's accepting of his Death in Stead of ours, and ſo acquitting or diſcharging us from it: Yea he hath thereby merited or purchaſed Mercy for us, all Manner of Mercy, in that his Death was of infinitely more Value, than all

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ours could ever have been. For that GOD is never merciful to any but only for the Sake of his Son, and upon the Account of his Death, is plain from his never ſhewing any Mercy, but only to thoſe for whom Chriſt dy'd. The fallen Angels ſtand in as much need of Mercy as fallen Man, but they never had nor ever will have any, becauſe Chriſt did not die for them. But he having taken our Nature upon him, and in it ſuffer'd the Puniſhments, which by the Law were due to us, GOD is graciouſly pleaſed for his Sake to promiſe Grace or Mercy to us; and whatſoever Grace or Mercy we receive from him, it comes to us only by Jeſus Chriſt: As the Holy Ghoſt here aſſures us, ſaying, *that Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.* It was in him that Grace was at firſt promiſed to us, and it is in him that ſuch Promiſes are verified or fulfilled. *For*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *all the Promiſes of GOD in him are yea, and in him Amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. that is, in Him they were all made, and in him they are all confirmed and performed to us. And therefore Truth is not here oppoſed as it is commonly thought, only to the Types and Figures of the Law, but it ſignifies more eſpecially the Truth and Certainty of the Promiſes, which GOD hath made to Mankind of Grace and Mercy in his Son. And that is the Reaſon, that Mercy, as I obſerv'd before, is not only here, but all

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along in the Holy Scriptures, put before Truth : Becauſe Mercy is firſt promiſed, and then truly granted according to that Promiſe, and both by Chriſt. It was by by Him that Grace was at firſt promiſed to us, and it is by Him that the Truth of ſuch Promiſes is aſſured to us, and ſo both *Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt*, vid. *Pſ.* 89. 33, 34, 49.

From hence we may gather, what is here meant, by *the Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, in my Text. It is the Grace, the free, undeſerved Favour and Mercy; it is the Grace of the Lord, the Almighty GOD, the Eternal and Only-begotten Son, of the ſame Subſtance and Glory with the Father; it is the Grace of the Lord Jeſus, the moſt High GOD made Man, and ſo become Jeſus, a Saviour to ſave his People from their Sins : It is the Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of GOD our Saviour, anointed to be to us a Prophet, Prieſt, and King, and ſo fully qualified, and able to do all things neceſſary for our Salvation. And therefore all ſuch things are here ſignified by the Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt : All things that are required, all things that can any way conduce to our Eternal Salvation; They are all contain'd in, and they all proceed from his Grace and Mercy to us, without whom we can neither have, nor do any thing at all towards it. But by him, there is nothing

thing but we may have, nothing but we can do, that he would have us, in order to our being saved. By him we are called out of Darkness *into his marvellous Light*, Rom. 1. 6. 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. By Him we have Grace to Repent, and turn every one from his own Iniquities, so that *Sin shall not have Dominion over us, seeing we are not under the Law but under Grace. Act.* 5. 31. *c.* 3. 26. *Rom.* 6. 14. *By Him we have Redemption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace*, Eph. 1. 7. *Col.* 1. 14. *Eph.* 4. 32. By Him we are justified freely through his Grace, *and accounted Righteous before GOD Himself*, *Rom.* 3. 24. *Tit.* 3. 7. 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *By Him being justified by Faith we have Peace with God*, and are as perfectly reconciled unto him, as if he had never been angry or displeased with us, *Rom.* 5. 1, 10. By Him we have *Power to become the Sons of God, and if Sons, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joynt-Heirs with him who is appointed Heir of all Things*, Joh. 1. 12. *Rom.* 8. 17. *Heb.* 1. 2. *By Him we are washed from our Sins in his own Blood, and are made Kings and Priests to God and his Father*, Rev. 1. 5, 6. By Him *we can overcome the World, and triumph over Death itself*, 1 Joh. 5. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 15. 57. By Him we can do, and by Him we can suffer whatsoever God sees good to lay upon us: For *his Grace is alway sufficient for us, and his strength made per-*

perfect in our weakneſs, ſo that we can do all things thro' Chriſt which ſtrengthens us, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *Phil.* 4. 13. By Him we have a Place prepared for us in Heaven, *that where he is there we may be alſo, to behold his Glory, and be glorified together with him,* John 14. 2, 3. c. 17. 24. Rom. 8. 17. In ſhort, By him we may have every thing that is any way neceſſary, either to the Beginning, the carrying on, or the perfecting our Salvation; *For he is able to ſave to the utmoſt all that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them,* Heb. 7. 25. All theſe things we have by Chriſt, and receive them of that Infinite Grace and Mercy that is in him. And therefore the Apoſtle wiſhing to the *Corinthians, The Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* he thereby wiſhed them every thing relating to their Eternal Salvation, as coming wholly and ſolely from his Grace and Mercy.

The next thing that follows in my Text, is, *the Love of* GOD. And it may well follow upon, *The Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt* here, for it doth ſo every-where. For He, the Eternal Son of GOD, having, as I have ſhewn, reconciled us to his Father whereſoever his Grace is, the Love of the Father follows in courſe, who being always well-pleaſed with his Son, in him is alſo well-pleaſed with all that partake of him; and hath a ſpecial Love for them: The Love of a Father to

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his Children, who is not only moſt tenderly affected towards them, but takes particular care of them, provides all things neceſſary for them, corrects them when they do amiſs, encourages them when theydo well, and ſettles a ſufficient maintenance upon them, that they may live comfortably in the World, according to every one's Eſtate and Quality. Such is the Love of theGreatGodto thoſe,who by the Grace of Chriſt are made his Children. He keeps them always under his own Care and Conduct: He gives them all Things neceſſary both for Life and Godlineſs: He chaſteneth them, not for his own Pleaſure, but for their Profit, that they may be Partakers of His Holineſs: He plentifully rewards all the Services they perform him in this World: And in the next he ſettles a Kingdom upon every one of them, the Kingdom of Heaven itſelf, where they ever live as happily as it is poſſible for Creatures to live: And all becauſe he loves them as his own Children by Adoption, and the Grace of his Only-begottten Son.

This therefore is here meant by the Love of GOD, the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and in him our GOD, and our Father. It is the Love of GOD as he is the Maker, Preſerver and Governour of the whole World, and orders and diſpoſeth of all things in it, according to his own Will and Pleaſure; and therefore as for his own Glory, ſo likewiſe for the good of theſe he lives and is well-pleaſed with. For we know ſaith the Apoſtle,

That all things work together for good to them that love GOD, *to them who are called according to his purpose*, Rom. 8. 28. All that love GOD, GOD loves: And seeing He loves them, He makes all things concur to their Advantage. For which purpose by his good Providence he makes them of such a Temper as will best suit with the Circumstances he designs for them, or else orders their Circumstances so as will best suit with the Temper he made them of: He measures out such a Proportion of the good things of this Life to them, as he knows will be good for them, and no more. He allots them such a Place to live in upon Earth, where they may enjoy the Means whereby to obtain Grace and Salvation by his Son. He keeps them from falling into any Evil, and all Evil from falling upon them. He defends them from all their Enemies, or else turns their Hearts and makes them to become their Friends. He infatuates the Counsels, and defeats all the ill Designs that Men or Devils can form against them. He hears the Prayers they put up unto Him in his Sons Name, and for his Sake accepts of all the Duties they perform to Him. He is with them wheresoever they are, to direct, assist, and prosper them in whatsoever they do. He Sanctifieth and Blesseth all manner of Occurrences to them, so that every thing which happens, is, all things considered, the best that could happen to them. There are many, I may truly say, innumerable such Instances of

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the Love which GOD the Father is pleased for his Son's Sake, to manifest to those who are regenerate and so made his Children in him, even by his ordinary Providence : And where that fails, he is pleased to do it in an extraordinary and miraculous manner : As we see in the Children of *Israel*, for he having a special Love for them, by reason of their near Relation to his Son incarnate, he brought them into and out of *Egypt* ; he led them, he fed them, he cloathed them, with Miracles for 40 Years together. *And all because he loved them, as it is said*, Deut. 4. 37. *chap.* 7. 7, 8. And particularly, when *Balaam* was hired to curse them, *God turned his Curse into a Blessing, because he loved them*, Deut. 23. 5.

Thus he one way or other always preserves those he loves from all things that may hurt them, and withholds nothing from them that will really do them good : But he carries them through all the changes and chances of this Mortal Life, so as to bring them at last to Heaven, where they clearly see his Love in every thing that ever befel them, continually Praise and Adore Him for it, and are Eternally happy in the perfect Enjoyment of it. From all which it appears, how great a Blessing it is, to have the Love of GOD the Father, the Almighty Creator and Governour of all things, how necessarily it follows upon the Grace of His Only-Begotten Son; and by consequence, with how great Reason as well as Charity to the *Corinthians*, the Apostle here,

next to the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, prays they might have the Love of GOD.

And that their Happiness might be compleat, he adds also; The Communion of the Holy Ghost, the Third Person in the most Blessed Trinity; called the Ghost or Spirit both of the Father and the Son, because he proceeds from both: And Holy in a peculiar manner, because all the Holiness that is in the Creatures, proceeds from him. And to have Communion or Fellowship with him, is to partake of his Holiness, and of all the Glorious Effects of the Grace of Christ, and the Love of GOD in him. *For as he proceedeth both from the Father and the Son, both the Father and the Son Act by him*; and therefore he is called the *Finger of God*, Luk. 11. 20. Matt. 12. 28. The Father acteth by him, in the Government of the World and all the Parts of it: The Son, in the Government of the Church and all particular Members in it. And whatsoever Blessings we receive from the Father thro' the Merits and Mediation of the Son, they are all convey'd to us by the Holy Ghost, which for that purpose abides us with us for ever, *Joh.* 14. 16. It is HE, as proceeding from, and sent by our Saviour to do it, *That enlightens our Minds, and teacheth us all things necessary to our everlasting Peace*, *Eph.* 1. 17. *Isa.* 11. 2. *Joh.* 14. 26. It is HE that keepeth us from Error, Heresy, and Schism, and guides us into all Truth, both in Faith and Manners,

ners, *Joh.* 16. 13. It is HE that Sanctifies, renews, and regenerates us, and so makes us new Creatures and the Children of the most High GOD, 2 *Thess.* 2. 13. *Joh.* 3. 5, 6, 8. *Tit.* 3. 5. It is HE that beareth Witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of GOD, *Rom.* 8. 16. It is HE that mortifies the Deeds of the Body, that quickens our Souls, and worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure, *Rom.* 8. 13. *Joh.* 6. 63. *Phil.* 2. 13. It is HE that endues Men with Spiritual Gifts, suitable to the Work which GOD requires of them: To one he gives the Word of Wisdom, to another the Word of Knowledge; to another Faith, to another the Gift of Healing, to another the working of Miracles, to another Prophecy, to another the discerning of Spirits, to another divers kinds of Tongues, to another the Interpretation of Tongues, 1 *Cor.* 12, 8, 9, 10. It is He that produceth in us Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, which are therefore said to be the Fruit of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. And so is all manner of Goodness and Vertue, wheresoever it is found among Men, it all springs from the good Spirit of GOD, as from its Root; and from thence also receives all its Nourishment, Increase and Strength, *Eph.* 3. 16. It is He also that is our only Comforter, who suppors and cheers our Spirits, by manifesting GOD's Love and Favour to us, lifting up the Light of his Countenance upon

us,

us, keeping our Hearts fixed upon our promised Inheritance, filling us with firm Hopes, and constant Expectations of it, and so giving us Peace, and Joy, and Satisfaction of Mind in whatsoever happens here below, *Joh.* 16. 7. *Acts* 9. 31. *Rom.* 14. 17, *&c.* In short, whatsoever Direction, Assistance or Power we have, or can have, of thinking, or desiring, or speaking, or doing any thing that is truly good, it is communicated to us by the Spirit of GOD our Saviour, and therefore is all comprehended under this one great Blessing which the Apostle here wisheth for in the last place, even the Communion of the Holy Ghost.

The several Parts of the Text being thus explain'd, we may easily observe the Meaning of the whole to be this, That the Apostle here prays that the *Corinthians* might have, *First*, the Grace of GOD the Son; that is, all the Mercy which He, as the Redeemer of Mankind, had purchased for them with his Blood: *Secondly*, that they might have the Love of GOD the Father; that is, all the Favours which He, as the supreme Governour of the World, could shew them: And *thirdly*, That they might have the Communion of the Holy Ghost; that is, all the Gifts, Graces and Comforts which He could communicate unto them, both from the Father and the Son: Or in short, that they might have all things, that GOD the Son, or GOD the Father, or GOD the Holy Ghost could do for them, according to their several Ways of working in the World;

World; that is, all things that could any way contribute to make them compleatly happy. All which, *David* also, or the Church by him, prays for in the same Method and Order, saying, GOD, אלהים, be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his Face to shine upon us, *Psal.* 67. 1.

Now from hence we may learn, how necessary it is to believe in the most Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons, One GOD: Seeing they all are pleased to concern themselves so much about us, and our Happiness depends upon them all. Hence we may learn to confide and trust on all and every one of these Divine Persons, for all things relating to our Happiness and Salvation. Hence we may learn what infinite Cause we have to praise and adore GOD for his infinite Goodness to us poor Mortals upon Earth, and to sing with the Choir of Heaven, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of his Glory*, Isa. 6. 3.

Hence we may learn, how much we are oblig'd to serve, and love, and please GOD the Father, GOD the Son, and GOD the Holy Ghost, who is thus infinitely gracious, and loving, and bountiful unto us. Hence we may learn, what great Reason our Church had to appoint, that at the End of every Psalm, as well as upon other Occasions, we should say or sing, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*. Hence, lastly, we may learn, wherefore our Church concludes

cludes her daily Prayers, as the Apoſtle doth this Epiſtle, with the Words of my Text, even becauſe they contain in ſhort, all that we can pray for, and are in effect the ſame with the Form which GOD himſelf preſcribed, wherewith the Prieſts ſhould Bleſs the People. On this wiſe, ſaith he, Ye ſhall Bleſs the Children of *Iſrael: The Lord bleſs thee and keep thee. The Lord make his Face to ſhine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his Countenance upon thee, and give thee Peace.* Numb. 6. 24, 25, 26. Where *Jehovah*, the Lord, is thrice repeated, and in the Original, hath in each place a ſeveral Accent, to denote, as the *Jews* themſelves acknowledge, ſome great Myſtery; which can be no other but the moſt Bleſſed Trinity. All the three Perſons whereof are here called, every one, the Lord, Jehovah. The Father is placed firſt: But the the Bleſſings beſtow'd ſeverally by each Perſon, are the ſame which are aſcribed to them in my Text. And when the Prieſt pronounced this Bleſſing to the People (as we ſtill do in the Viſitation of the Sick) GOD promiſed that He himſelf would accordingly Bleſs them. And if you faithfully and devoutly receive it as ye ought, I do not queſtion but he will do ſo now, upon my pronouncing in his Name, the ſame Bleſſing, according to this Apoſtolical Form in my Text. *The Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and the Love of* GOD, *and the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all.* Amen.

FINIS.

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MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Beveridge, William,

The dignity, office, and authority of the priesthood

London 1708

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